TREASURE FLOWER

A CHILD OF JAPAN

BY

RUTH GAINES

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TREASURE FLOWER

A CHILD OF JAPAN

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TREASURE FLOWER

A CHILD OF JAPAN

BY

RUTH GAINES

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TO MY

FATHER AND MOTHER

IN REMEMBRANCE OF JAPAN

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To Professor Edward S. Morse for reading the manuscript, to The Japan Society for help in securing illustrations, to the Japan Paper Company for permission to use a woodcut by Howard McCormick, to Mr. S. Z. Shirae for the loan of prints and for other courtesies, and to Miss Dora Amsden, author, and Paul Elder and Company, publishers of "The Heritage of Hiroshige," for permission to reproduce the halftone facing page 126, my thanks are due.

RUTH GAINES.

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A LETTER TO THE ONE WHO READS THIS BOOK

Dear Schoolmate:—

Do you remember the story of the Sleeping Beauty,—the little princess who dreamed away a hundred years in her drowsy castle in the forest, and was kissed awake one happy morning by the prince? She pricked her finger on a magic spindle and fell into an enchanted sleep because there had been a mistake at her christening party and a touchy old fairy had not been invited. But when the prince kissed her she awoke just as young as if it were only to-morrow morning, although her face was one hundred years more beautiful, and her manners were one hundred years more charming, and her mind was one hundred years more eager and intelligent than it had been when she fell asleep. Do you remember?

If you do, the story of Japan will seem almost like a twice-told tale. Listen!—

Once upon a time, in the beginning of things, long before America was discovered, there was born in the Pacific Ocean a little island empire called Nippon, or Japan, the Land of the Rising Sun. A princess among nations was Japan; her people were courageous and courteous and beauty-loving; her harbors and gates were open to travelers, and her mind and heart were open to truth. The Chinese and Koreans visited her from the mainland of Asia, bringing learning and letters and religious philosophies; and after the Europeans had begun to sail around the world, there came Portuguese missionaries offering Christianity to these strange islanders, and Dutch traders with western merchandise to exchange for the silks of the Land of the Rising Sun.

The Japanese had a religion of their own before the Christians came, a religion which they had made out of their fear of death and their love for their fathers and mothers. They

called it *Shinto,* which means "The Way of the Gods," and the gods of the Japanese were really, in the beginning, their fathers and mothers who died. They thought that their fathers and mothers, after death, became gods, and could answer prayer and bring good or ill fortune to the family. And of course they thought that the souls of dead emperors of Japan were chiefs among the gods, just as the living emperor was the head of the nation. But, as I told you, their hearts and minds, as well as their harbors and homes, were open in those early days; and when the Chinese came bringing the religion of Buddha, the Japanese listened eagerly to Buddhist teachings, and learned to be kind to animals, and to believe that the good or evil which we do in this life will be rewarded or punished in another life,—for the Buddhists think that we may be born again and again on earth, and that each time we are reborn we are happy or unhappy in our new life because of our naughtiness or goodness in the old, dead past. Lafcadio Hearn, an American

who went to Japan in 1893 and devoted the rest of his life to teaching the Japanese and studying them, tells us that life for the Japanese, after they had come under the teaching of the Buddhists, meant "one stage of a measureless journey, whose way stretched back through all the night of the past, and forward through all the mystery of the future,—out of eternities forgotten into the eternities to be; and the world itself was to be thought of only as a traveler's resting-place, an inn by the roadside."

But the Buddhist monks taught other things besides religion. Mr. Hearn, in his book called "Japan," writes that "Buddhism offered the boon of education to all,—not merely a religious education, but an education in the arts and learning of China," and that "Architecture, painting, sculpture, engraving, printing, gardening,—in short, every art and industry that helped to make life beautiful—developed first in Japan under Buddhist teaching." He goes so far as to say that "There is even today scarcely one interesting or beautiful thing,

produced in the country, for which the nation is not in some sort indebted to Buddhism."

This was the Japan to which the Christian missionaries came in 1549, and so eagerly did the Japanese welcome the good tidings of Christ that in less than forty years there were more than two hundred Christian churches in the country, and if these Portuguese missionaries had been wise and humble in spreading the gospel of love, Japan might be a Christian country to-day. But they were greedy, like many other Christians before and since, and they were foolish. They tried not only to Christianize the people but also to get control of the government of the country; they wanted to rule Japan. But the independent, patriotic Japanese resented this, just as we should resent having our President and Congress obliged to take orders from some European nation; they put the foreign priests and the native catechists in ships and sent them out of the country, and later they persecuted and slew the foreign and Japanese Christians who were still in the country, and

they shut the door of Japan against the rest of the world. All foreigners except the Dutch traders were sent out of the empire, and the Dutch were obliged to move to a little island, only two hundred and forty feet wide and six hundred feet long, where they were treated like prisoners, and no one was allowed to visit them without permission.

For the next two hundred years, between 1636 and 1851, no foreign countries except Holland and China were allowed to trade in Japan. Mr. Hearn tells us that it was a capital offense for any Japanese to leave Japan, "anyone who might succeed in leaving the country by stealth, was to be put to death upon his return. . . . It was forbidden also to construct ships capable of long voyages: and all ships exceeding a dimension fixed by the government were broken up. Lookouts were established along the coast to watch for strange vessels; and any European ships entering a Japanese port, excepting the ships of the Dutch Company, were to be attacked and destroyed."

So the Princess Japan, pricked by the Christian spindle which she did not know how to use, —unable to see that danger lay, not in the Christian religion itself, the gospel of love and self-sacrifice, but in the narrow-minded and grasping men who misunderstood the teaching of their Master, Christ,—shut her bright eyes and fell into an enchanted sleep that lasted more than two hundred years.

Of course, dear schoolmate, you understand that I am talking fairytale language now; I do not mean that every man, woman and child in the islands of Japan did actually dream and snore away two hundred years of precious time with eyes tight shut. But I do mean that the country was as lost to the world as if it had actually been asleep. The people lived as their ancestors had lived, bound by immemorial custom. Peacefully, beautifully, prosperously, they lived, devoting themselves to the details of life, making rules about the proper way to drink tea, or to arrange flowers, or to bow to a friend, and studying their ancient history. Yet even

in sleep we do grow, else we die. And Princess Japan was not dead when the Prince came sailing over the Pacific Ocean and gave her the rousing smack which opened her eyes to the outside world once more.

This was the way it happened:—

By the middle of the nineteenth century there were a good many ships sailing in the Pacific Ocean. England traded with China, and American fishermen hunted whales in the Northern Pacific; and there was need of a line of American vessels to sail between California and China. But in the middle of the great waterway, blocking traffic, were the inhospitable little islands of Japan, refusing to give help to ships wrecked in her waters, and treating cruelly the sailors who were sometimes cast away on her shores. So the United States at last felt that something must be done about it, and after one or two unsuccessful attempts to knock at her neighbor's door, our government sent Commodore Perry to Japan with a squadron of four ships, and he arrived at the

entrance of the Bay of Yedo on July 8, 1853.

What do you suppose the sleeping princess thought when she saw those strange magic ships, sailing against the wind, without sails? For you must remember there were no ships run by steam in the old days before Japan curled up for her long nap. The Princess never tells all her thoughts; but this much we do know, that she woke up, and has been very wide awake ever since.

In the spring of 1854, Commodore Perry and the Japanese agreed together that two ports of Japan should be open to America, in order that ships might get coal and wood and water and provisions in their journeys across the Pacific, and that ship-wrecked sailors might be protected. And in August, 1856, our first American Consul General to Japan, Mr. Townsend Harris, arrived at Shimoda.

And now it became quite evident that Princess Japan had been growing just like any other healthy young person, while she slept. For, lo and behold, she had outgrown her govern-

ment, just as a child outgrows her frock; so she proceeded to make herself a new one. But with true Japanese respect and love for ancestral things, she made it out of the beautiful ancient fabric of olden days; just as your mother might take your great great grandmother's lovely old silk wedding dress and cut it over to fit you.

In earliest days the Japanese were ruled by their Mikado, or Emperor, who was the head of their religion as well as of their political government. But some time in the seventh century the real administration of the state, the political affairs of the country, began to pass into the hands of deputies or regents—not unlike prime ministers; and as time passed the regent, or Shogun as he was called, became the real ruler, and the Mikado was deprived of his political and legal power. But he was still the religious head of the empire, and the Shoguns, in order to keep the people away from him and to hold the affairs of state in their own hands, surrounded him with mystery and ceremonial

as if he had been a god, until at last the common people began to think that he really was a god, and that any mere mortal who looked upon his holy face would die.

Now, during the two hundred years that Japan was shut away from the rest of the world and living in her past, the Japanese scholars were carefully studying the ancient history of the nation, and the development of the old religious and political customs; and some people began to say, "Why does the Mikado no longer rule his Kingdom? The Shogun is a usurper. Let us set him aside and restore our emperor to his early rights." The Princess was beginning to stir in her sleep.

So, when the Shogun agreed with Commodore Perry that Japan should make friends with America, some of the Japanese said, "Who is the Shogun, that he should do this thing? It is for the Mikado to say whether or not we shall open our doors. The Shogun has betrayed us to the foreigner." And there was a revolution in Japan. The party of the Mikado

rose up and overthrew the party of the Shogun; and the Mikado was restored to power. This was in 1867.

But the new emperor was a wise man. He saw that Japan must begin to play her part in the world's affairs; he kept the Shogun's agreement with America and set about bringing his nation up to date. Great great grandmamma's silken gown was cut over in the fashion of the nineteenth century. In 1873, the old edict boards forbidding Christianity were taken down. In 1885, Japanese were given permission to emigrate to America. In 1889, a constitution was proclaimed, in which religious liberty was guaranteed to the people and a national representative government was instituted.

As early as 1869 there seem to have been Japanese silk growers in California; and a few Japanese sailors and students found their way to our shores from time to time, but not until 1885 did they begin to come in considerable numbers.

Many of those who come to us are students, eager, intelligent young men who seek an education in our American schools and colleges. The greater number come to earn a living as farmers. They settle in the western part of the United States, especially California, and they work on the fruit farms and the sugar beet lands, and in the orchards. Many of them lease farms, and they are willing to pay high rents, for they are such good farmers that they can often get more profit out of a farm than American farmers can. Besides the students and the farmers, there are a number who hire themselves out as house servants, and others who run very successful restaurants. Everything that a Japanese sets himself to do, he does well.

Mr. H. A. Millis who has made a careful study of the Japanese in America, tells us they are intelligent, studious, cleanly in their habits, generous, temperate, law-abiding, moral, industrious, ambitious. That they are well-educated and usually have had some schooling

before they come to America, and that no adult immigrants, unless it be the Hebrews, show so great a desire to learn the English language, although they do not learn to speak it as well as some other races in the same length of time. They are quick to adopt our customs and dress and food, and they read newspapers and magazines and take an interest in what is happening in the United States.

This is a long list of virtues and good qualities, and yet you may have heard, especially if you live in a western State, that the Japanese are not desirable immigrants, and that the United States would be better off without them.

Why do some Americans wish to keep the Japanese out of the United States?

There are several reasons. For one thing, it is said that the Japanese take the work away from white laborers. They will work longer hours, for smaller wages, than white men will; but after they have underbid the whites in this way, and got the work for themselves, they raise the prices of labor. And again, it is said,

that the Japanese do not always keep their contracts,—contract, as perhaps you know, is the business name for promise. The Japanese sometimes break their business promises. Perhaps they have agreed to pick all the grapes in a vineyard, for a certain price; but when the crop is half picked, they are offered higher wages to pick in another vineyard, and they break their promise and leave the first place. We Americans think this is a dishonest way of doing business, but we must remember that these strangers, when they first come to us, do not know our language; all our ways seem topsy turvy to them; sometimes they may not have understood the contracts which they have signed; it is quite possible that, in their bewilderment, they have thought us greedy and hard-hearted for trying to keep them from earning the higher wage elsewhere. But as time passes, they seem to be adopting our ways. They do not underbid as much as they used to, and they are better at keeping their contracts.

There is still a third reason why some Amer-

icans are unfriendly to Japanese immigrants, and it is the most important of all. Many people feel that the United States ought to be a white country; they think that our forefathers really had white men in mind when they made the Constitution, and that our affairs would be much less complicated if the negroes had never been brought over from Africa. But it is not the negroes' fault that they are here, it is entirely the white men's fault, and now the negro has earned the right to share in the governing of the land which his labor has helped to prosper. It is his land as well as ours. But, to bring in another dark race to share the country and the government with white men only confuses things still more. The Japanese themselves can easily understand this point of view, for it was because they were determined to keep Japan for the Japanese, and to rule their islands without the interference of white foreigners, that they drove out the Christian missionaries in the seventeenth century. The reason they welcome us so cordially to Japan

to-day is because they know that the United States has no desire to annex Japan, or to usurp the rule of the country.

So, it would seem that sooner or later the United States must make up its mind to one of two things: either the Japanese and other Asiatic peoples must be allowed to come in as freely as European immigrants come, to be citizens and to own land; or, we must confess frankly that we want a white country. This would not mean that no Japanese or Chinese or Hindus could come here, it would only mean that they could not come in large numbers and settle in colonies in our states, and take the work which white laborers need. There would still be Japanese students in our colleges, and Japanese travelers and business men in our cities, just as there are American students and travelers and business men in Europe and in Japan to-day.

Meanwhile, if we are to make the right decision when the time comes, we need to get as well acquainted as possible with our island

neighbor, and to strengthen the friendly ties which have already bound us to her for more than half a century. That is why "Treasure Flower" has been included in this series of story-books. Read it; and see if you do not love and admire the brilliant and beautiful Empire of Japan, even as little American Lynette loved and admired the little Princess Plum Blossom.

Affectionately yours,

FLORENCE CONVERSE.

TREASURE FLOWER

CHAPTER I

THE SHIP OF GOOD FORTUNE

NOT many miles from the busy fishing port of Nagahama, up among the quiet hills that here surround Lake Biwa, is a little temple called the Temple of Benten. A lovely spot it is, set in a soft curve of hills that flame in the spring with crimson azaleas, and in the autumn with crimson maple trees. The sweeping roof of the shrine is half hidden by a grove of pines and bamboos that climb the slope behind it; its red wooden *torii* [1] marks the goal of a grassy footpath from the green ricelands below. Standing beside this gateway, you look far out over these same ricelands to the level blue of the lake, and to the deeper blue of the bold mountains forming its western rim.

[1] This and the following figures refer to notes which will be found at the end of the book.

But on the morning our story opens, you would have seen nothing of all this; only a drifting whirl of snowflakes that blotted out the world. Surely, any one who ventured out in such a storm must have had a strong purpose. Yet such a one there was, battling his way against the wind up the narrow path to the Temple. Nor did he seem to lose his footing, in spite of the driving snow; he walked with head bent, but briskly, as if he knew his way. Tucked into his thick *kimono* folds, he carried a bundle, something he evidently considered very precious and shielded carefully from the prying wind. In his girdle were thrust two swords, and over his shoulder, on a staff, was slung a small packet of clothes. By these tokens you might know that our traveler was a wandering knight, probably the retainer of some high feudal lord whose fortunes had been ruined in the recent civil wars.

But see, he has reached the Temple at last, and, to summon the priest, has rung the great gong that hangs before the door. Once, twice,

three times he rings, making a din as if the very gods of thunder were abroad.

Within the darkly shuttered house, from whose chinks thin rifts of light streamed out across the snowy court, there was indeed a contrast to the bitter storm without. On the hearth, a charcoal fire burned brightly. Beside it on lacquered tables the morning meal was laid; steaming bowls of *mochi*,[2] and bean soup, and fish freshly broiled. Plum blossoms hung in a vase in the raised alcove, and plum blossoms bloomed by the latticed window.

The priest sat in his flowing robes, from which the candles in tall holders picked glints of red and silver. His wife, Mistress Lavender, sat beside him, telling him, no doubt, as she served him, of her dreams of the night before and of what the ship of Good Fortune was to bring to them this new year. For to-day was New Year's Day. In its honor the plums, carefully forced through the cold winter, had blossomed, and the priest and his wife had donned their ceremonial dress.

All this the knight saw through the cracks in the wooden shutters, and rang the gong again.

This time the priest heard and raised his head to listen. The next instant he ran to throw open the door and welcome his unexpected guest.

The knight, half exhausted, stumbled into the vestibule. Together the priest and his wife took off his sandals and unlaced his bowl-shaped hat, shaking out the snow.

It was only then that they recognized their visitor. Ten years of exile had sharpened the rounded features of the boy they remembered, given keenness to dreamy eyes and hauteur to a sensitive mouth. The poor blue cotton tunic and trousers disguised the form they had been wont to see clad in emblazoned silks. The rank-cap [3] of authority was replaced by a peasant's hat. Only the swords proudly left unhidden the crest of one of the noblest of the baronial families of the Empire—a family pro-

scribed and declared by imperial edict to be dead. Yet surely the son of their murdered lord stood before them, to whom a few short years ago the lakeshore, the Temple, nay the very lives of these, his retainers, had belonged.

Speechless with astonishment, they dropped to their knees and made a reverence.

"Yes, it is I," said the young man bitterly, "but the days for obeisance are past. I am only a simple *ronin*,[4] as you see, and I come to you in need."

"On our loyalty you may count as on death itself." The priest and his wife spoke together in their eagerness to serve.

"I thank you," said the knight. "You will see I did count on it. Here, good mother," and his voice broke, "is the treasure of my heart, all that I have left of the wife who was too frail a flower for these troubled times of ours."

From the bundle in his arms, so carefully guarded, there came a tiny cry. Mistress Lavender sprang forward. In one moment she

had slipped off the wet outer wrappings, in another she had cradled the little, motherless baby on her heart.

Ere night fell swiftly on the brief winter day, the traveler, refreshed and rested, had gone once more into the storm. But he left behind him a fragrance sweeter than the fragrance of the New Year's plums.

On a little bed of quilts, fast asleep, lay the baby. Her pink sleeping jacket was no pinker than her soft, soft cheeks. Her black hair and lashes brought out the transparent white of her pretty forehead. One hand, like a flower, lay outside her covers.

Mistress Lavender, kneeling beside her, touched it softly.

"See, husband," she whispered, "is she not altogether like the plum blossoms that come in the snow?"

"And is she not," he answered, smiling down at her, "altogether the answer to thy prayers?"

His wife looked at him with shining eyes.

"It is as thou sayest. Surely Benten,[5] the Giver of Children, hath brought her in her Treasure Ship for us."

CHAPTER II

THE FOXES OF INARI

TEN new years, with their busy preparations and joyous *O meditos,*[6] had passed peacefully over the Temple of Benten; and little Treasure Flower, as she was called, had grown with them to be quite a big girl indeed, —though her body was so slender and her black eyes were so large that she looked sometimes more like a butterfly or a wood fairy than a girl. She was a shy little thing, too, for the temple was too far up in the hills to permit her to play very often with the children in the village down on the lake shore. And when the old, grave Abbot of Hiei,[7] or the headman of the village came, as they sometimes did, to dine with the priest, or a new baby was brought to be blessed at the temple, Treasure Flower was far more likely to slip away to the bamboo

grove, or to the lovely hills beyond, than to sit and listen to what her elders had to say. Only on festival days did she really enjoy being one of the village clan and taking part in the merriment with them.

There were many of these festivals each year. But the best and the brightest was always New Year's Day. That is like Christmas and birthdays all rolled into one in Japan, for everybody there celebrates his birthday on the first day of the year. Weeks beforehand, Aunt Lavender was busy scrubbing and cleaning; and Uncle Cedarmount hung fresh pine boughs and bamboos and rope garlands at the door. But Treasure Flower always forgot the work and remembered only the gay new dresses, the wonderful *mochi* cakes (made with what ceremony in the courtyard by the hired *mochi* man!), and the new battledore and shuttlecock with which she could play all day long. Then, too, there were the many people who came and went through these glad days. First, on New Year's Eve the fathers of fam-

ilies received the torches Uncle Cedarmount (but such a stately uncle in his white robes of office) had blessed for lighting their New Year's hearths, and went again in the darkness, looking like a chain of fireflies winding slowly homeward through the snowy fields. Then, perhaps, after one should have been asleep (but wasn't), Uncle Cedarmount sprinkled the house with the little burnt beans which keep away all goblins. And then, before one knew it, the sun was really up, and some time in the dawn the Treasure Ship must have come sailing in unseen, over the blue lake waters, for there in the alcoved parlor, beneath the blossoming plums, were the gifts that only the Treasure Ship could bring.

But, after all, the festival of the whole year that Treasure Flower loved most was that of the harvest time. When the ricefields, so green in spring, turned to gold, the farmers cut the heavy grain with their sharp sickles. Like a fairy encampment of thatched roofs, square after square the fields spread away to the lake.

"UNCLE CEDARMOUNT IN HIS ROBES OF OFFICE"

Then was the time to give thanks to the Goddess of the Harvest, who had sent snow, and rain, and sun to make the golden grain.

Behind the Temple of Benten, where a spreading maple flung his crimson branches like a brocade against the green pines, was a smaller shrine that the country people had built to Inari, the Rice-Goddess. Treasure Flower knew it well. There, in the gnarled roots of the maple, lived her comrades the White Foxes, who, her Uncle told her, were Inari's messengers. Each morning since she could remember, she had fed them. They followed her now whenever she went to the woods—big Benkei with his sweeping silver tail, Cho-Cho, who looked like a soft white moth, and all the little fluffy foxes, each of whom knew his name. The Festival of the Harvest was their festival too.

Treasurer Flower was telling them all about it one day as she fed them their millet cakes.

"You must know, Benkei," she said, stroking his head solemnly, "we mortals owe you a

great deal. Did you ever hear the story of the Grateful Foxes?"

Benkei shook his head.

"Well, once upon a time," began she, "two gentlemen went on a picnic in the spring, to gather fresh, new herbs. They had picked their basket full, and were sitting down under a cherry tree, beside a clear spring, to eat the lunch they had brought. Just then they saw three boys with their baskets go by. Presently they heard something crying in the bushes, as if it were hurt. Then came the sounds of blows and sharp yelps of pain.

"Springing up, they ran across the ravine. There they saw the three boys, all kneeling on the ground, tying up a little red fox cub. Beside it were the long sticks the cruel boys had usd to beat off the father and the mother fox, who, poor things, had run away.

" 'What are you doing?' asked the older man quite sharply.

" 'Why, we are taking this cub to Mr. Shore-Village, who will pay us for it.'

"'How much will he pay you?'

"'A great sum; three hundred cash.'

"'I will pay you half a *bu*,[8] sell him to me.'

"'Certainly, if you will give so much.' And the boys left the cub and scampered off, very well pleased with their bargain.

"Then the man who had bought the cub quickly untied him. He expected little cub to run away, but the poor little fellow was too badly frightened. Besides, the thoughtless boys had hurt one of his paws.

"When the friends saw that, they picked a certain leaf out of the basket and bound up the wound.

"As they happened to look up the ravine, there in the bamboo grass sat the father and mother fox, anxiously watching. Little cub saw them at the same instant, and with one bound he was off. Then how happy the Fox family was! Father and mother licked little cub all over, and looking toward the two friends who had given him back to them, bowed their thanks.

"Now the man who had bought little cub was a well-to-do tradesman in the village. He had two maid-servants, besides men-servants, and lived quite comfortably. He had also a wife and a little boy just as old as I. But that little boy fell sick so that no doctor could cure him. At last they said only the medicine from a live fox's liver would do him any good.

"The father was very sad at this. He would not have a fox killed, even to save his only boy.

" 'But, perhaps,' he thought, 'some hunter may have a fox on hand.'

"So he asked his dear friend if he, too, would not be on the look-out to see if he could not buy one.

"That night a hunter came knocking at the gate.

" 'I heard through your friend,' he said, 'that you wanted a fox's liver. I happened to have one, so I brought it.'

"The poor father thanked the hunter with tears. The mother got up out of bed to offer him something to eat. They both urged him to stay with them over night.

" 'No thank you,' said the hunter. 'I have friends in the next village.' So he went on his way.

"Three days later, when the father's friend returned from a journey, the little boy was well. All the family thanked him for sending the fox's liver.

" 'Stop,' said the friend, 'I don't know what you mean. I came to tell you I could not get it for you.'

"Then they were surprised and did not know what to think.

"But that night the mother fox came and stood beside the man's pillow. She was crying, so that the tears dripped from her long sleeve. " 'It was my husband who disguised himself and brought you the fox's liver. We knew your son would die without it. So, to show our gratitude, we killed our cub, whom you saved. It was his father himself who brought the liver to you.' "

"Then the man wept indeed at the goodness of the foxes. His wife heard him and asked:—

" 'Dear husband, why do you weep?'

"Then he told her of the grateful foxes, and then she too could not keep back her tears.

"The next day, under the tall cedar trees in their garden, the man and his wife put up a new shrine to the spirits of the two grateful foxes.

"And that is one of the reasons we make a festival to you," concluded Treasure Flower, with a final caress.

As for Benkei and Cho-Cho, they nodded their heads wisely, as if they understood.

CHAPTER III

THE CHILDREN OF SPRING

BUT Treasure Flower had other playmates than the white foxes. There were the gold and silver fish that lived in the pond just at the edge of the verandah, and that came swimming to the surface whenever she clapped her hands. There were the gleaming butterflies and dragonflies and fireflies that played hide-and-seek with her all up and down the zigzag garden paths, and the tiny white-whiskered cricket that sang *"chingkorin, chingkorin,"* all night so cheerily from his cage beside her bed. Strangest of all, there were the silk worms that Aunt Lavender called by the pretty name of *"haru-ko,"* which means the children of spring.

When the April sun threw the first shadows of the cherry blossoms in the garden, like a

black stencil, on the latticed paper of her bedroom window, Treasure Flower knew that the time for the *"haru-ko"* had come. She knew, too, that she ought to throw back the soft silk quilts, put on the little blue *kimono* hung so conveniently on the screen beside her, and run to help Aunt Lavender. For Aunt Lavender's spring babies, besides being very precious, were very particular, and had to have many things done for their comfort. Instead, I am afraid Treasure Flower lingered sometimes in bed, watching the cherry branch sway, or the sparrows flit with quick wings across her paper window. How fragrant were the flowers; how dainty the little room with its polished woodwork and walls of crinkled blue! I should not wonder if the gold fish got quite hungry some mornings. But their little mistress never forgot them. Before she had her own breakfast, she brought their bowl of foamy cakes, scattering them from the verandah and watching the hungry mouths dart like sunbeams beneath the rippled surface.

A hurried bowl of rice for herself followed, and then she ran to find Aunt Lavender. If she or I did not tell you, you could never guess where Aunt Lavender was. Not up in the attic nor down in the cellar, for Treasure Flower's home had neither. Not in the house at all, but through the garden, across the courtyard and in the temple, right under the altar of Benten.

The Lady Benten was not at all a goddess to be afraid of, as you see. This spring morning, when the whole front of her temple was thrown open to sun and air, there was not even the usual dimness about her golden altar. With her kind face, and outstretched hands (four of them so that she could do all the things she ought to do) she looked the helpful goddess of good fortune that she was. Treasure Flower loved her devotedly; in fact she considered the goddess her own particular friend. Had not Benten picked out this lovely home for her and brought her long ago to be Aunt Lavender's little girl?

But what was Aunt Lavender doing? From some chests at right and left of the altar, she took sheet after sheet of cardboard. Each cardboard was covered with hundreds of black specks, the eggs of the *haru-ko*. Very carefully indeed Aunt Lavender took them out, carried them to the light, looked them over, and placed them, side by side, on the lower shelves of the racks that ran from the floor almost to the rafters of the temple roof. To put these racks in place had been Uncle Cedarmount's work,—and, yes, there was Uncle Cedarmount now, up on a ladder, helping Aunt Lavender.

"Oh, oh," cried Treasure Flower, "I am so sorry I did not get up when you called me."

Uncle Cedarmount stopped long enough in his work to smile down at her; such a twinkling, wrinkling smile! And Aunt Lavender paused to give her a loving pat on her shining black hair. Evidently they were not the sort of people to be afraid of either, any more than the Goddess Benten.

Then little Treasure Flower set to work. She, too, took out the cards of eggs, and carried them and put them one by one in place. How her feet and her fingers flew! An hour longer and the great work was done; the sliding screens of the temple were drawn, and the *haru-ko* left to hatch under Benten's watchful eyes.

Anxious days and nights of waiting followed. Mice are particularly fond of silkworms' eggs; and east winds and damp, cold days are almost as dangerous to them. Treasure Flower spent her time between Aunt Lavender in the temple, and Uncle Cedarmount in the mulberry grove on the southern slope of the hills. Though the grove was certainly as old as Uncle (for had he not told her so?), the closely bolled bushes were no higher than Treasure Flower's head. Their branches now were all leafed in delicate green, so that each tree looked like a big, silky pompon. It seemed as if each pushing leaf knew it must hurry, to be ready for the little *haru-ko* to eat.

One evening the family gathered as usual about the lighted *andon* [9] for their late supper. Treasure Flower had passed her bowl for a second helping of rice.

Aunt Lavender filled it and handed it back with an anxious look in her eyes.

"Such hard work and such late hours for such a little girl!" she said. "In the old days, when Lord Fuwa was alive, there were servants to do the work."

"Yes," said Uncle Cedarmount cheerily, "but our silkworms never throve so well, and our silk was never of such a fine quality as now. As for our Treasure," and with that he reached out and drew her, cushion and all, to his side, "I don't think the work will keep her from growing into a good, useful woman —"

"She is that already," Aunt Lavender protested. "Do you know what I have been thinking? Our Treasure is old enough now to have some silkworms of her very own to raise. Would you like that, blossom-child?"

Like it? Treasure Flower certainly thought she would. She lay awake a long time that night, watching the cherry petals fall in the moonlight across her lattice. "Tomorrow," she thought, "the ground will be white with cherry-snow. And tomorrow," she counted swiftly on her fingers, "one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, *ten* days. Yes, tomorrow my *haru-ko* will hatch."

Sure enough, in the morning, hundreds of tiny wriggly black worms were all ready to be lifted from the cardboards to the swinging mats that were to be their home. And two whole mats full, low enough so she could reach them without climbing the ladder, Aunt Lavender gave Treasure Flower for her very own. Now there was no lying abed in the morning. Basket on arm, she was picking the mulberry leaves before the sun was up. Then chop, chop, you could hear her in the kitchen, cutting the leaves into smallest mouthfuls for the baby worms to eat. Five times a day they had to

be fed. A hundred times a day she went to peep at them. With dainty fingers, she would take up one and then another to examine it. Then she would lay her ear to the mats, and listen.

"Rustle, rustle, bustle, bustle," said the silkworms, eating, eating, growing, growing, day and night.

But one morning, ten days after the eggs had hatched, there was silence in the temple; the silkworms were all asleep. Then Aunt Lavender, who knew they would be napping, arranged a kind of spring house-cleaning for them. While they lay in a fine netting that had been slung above each mat, the mats themselves were taken out to the court and brushed and aired and sunned. And when the *haru-ko* waked, bigger and lighter-colored and hungrier than before, their mats were all ready for them, spread with another breakfast of fresh green leaves. Twice more the *haru-ko* slept in the month of May. Other times, night

and day, they ate and grew, grew and ate, till one day, when Treasure Flower went to feed them, one of her longest, whitest worms stood on his tail waving at her, as if he had a very important secret to whisper in her ear.

Quick as a flash, she flew to the kitchen, where Aunt Lavender was getting breakfast.

"Aunty, Honorable Aunty," she cried, almost upsetting the neatly set breakfast trays in her haste, "the *haru-ko* want to spin."

"Dear, dear," answered Aunty, with a worried look at the wet court and the rain that slanted against the temple walls. "I wish they might have chosen a better day. But then," she added, "they have done well so far,—and it can't be helped."

So all day Aunty and Uncle and Treasure Flower worked again in the temple, lifting the tipsy worms into fresh rice-straw nests, and giving them basket after basket of leaves that they were big enough now to eat unchopped. Crunch, crunch, crackle, crackle, day and night,

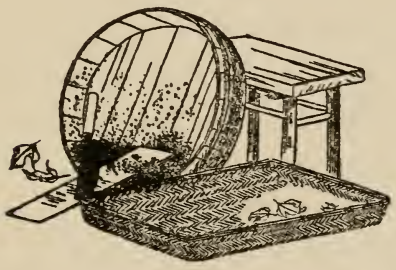
day and night, ate the hungry worms. But three days later, tucked each in the white, silky hammock it had spun, the *haru-ko* took their last sleep.

Then indeed the long watching was nearly over. Day by day the cocoons, transparent at first, became darker. Some were cream-colored, some sulphur-yellow, and others salmon pink. Like magically tinted robins' eggs they lay at last on mats, spread in the court-yard in the sun.

Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount and Treasure Flower stood looking at them a moment before covering them with the thin white papers they had ready, to protect the delicate floss.

"Wife," said Uncle Cedarmount, as he stooped to pick up a handful of the cocoons from the mat at his feet, "I think these are the very best cocoons of any year. And these," he held the soft, filmy shells up to the light, "are the finest and largest of all."

"Those," said Aunt Lavender quietly, but glowing with pride nevertheless, "belong to Treasure Flower."



CHAPTER IV

THE LORDLESS CASTLE

DOES it seem to you that Treasure Flower's spring was all work and no play? It is certainly true that Uncle Cedarmount and Aunt Lavender were quite poor, and quite differently situated from what they had been when Fuwa, Lord of the Barrier and Regent of the Empire, was alive. To his family this temple belonged, and to it had come each year from his treasury a revenue of five hundred *koku* [10] of rice. Then, Uncle Cedarmount gave lectures on the Chinese classics to the highborn *samurai* [11] lads who thronged the white castle by the lake shore, to learn the ways of knights. Then, Aunt Lavender sat in robes of crêpe, on ivory-colored mats, and directed her maidservants in housework and spinning and weaving, instead of doing these tasks herself. Then, if

Treasure Flower had been alive,—But no, we know (though Treasure Flower did not) that in those happier days she would not have belonged to Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount at all.

Still, you must not feel sorry for her. If I have not told you of the happy outings she had, in spite of the *haru-ko,* it is only because I, and not Uncle Cedarmount and Aunt Lavender, have not had time for them. One evening, they all went with picnic supper, to see the moon rise over the misty hills and throw her silver ripples on the firefly bordered lake. Another evening, when the azaleas were in their glory, they watched the sunset, red as the flaming hillsides, till earth and lake and sky burned to a crimson flame. Homeward bound up the silent hill path and through the temple garden, Treasure Flower felt as if her very heart had been colored by wonderful visions of beauty, even as the still, deep lake below.

But the first of July saw the close of the silk raising and the cocoons laid away to season be-

fore the floss was reeled. The rains, too, that always made the month of June so damp, were over and past. One glorious morning when the dawn was still gray and the sparrows in the eaves had hardly begun their early chatter, all the family set forth. They were going to the great white castle on the headland, to see the lotus flowers open to the sun.

Uncle Cedarmount started first, carrying in his hand the luncheon box tied in a blue napkin. Slung beside it with cord and gay red tassels was a gourd of *sake* [12] to drink. Aunt Lavender trudged along, holding her skirts up from the dewy bamboo grass that fringed the path. But Treasure Flower, her gay little *kimono* tucked into her belt, her scarlet-thonged *geta* [13] clap-clapping at every step, danced merrily on ahead, till presently only her topknot of scarlet crêpe and her green silk butterfly net could be seen bob-bobbing along the narrow lanes between the tall-growing rice.

But when she came to the first stone bastions of the castle, she sat down on a fallen pillar to

"THE LORDLESS CASTLE"

wait. The gray frowning walls, the silence stirred only by the whispering pine trees that clung where they could to the sheer-rising cliffs, and—yes,—the ghosts of the warriors who had fought and died there, filled her heart with sudden dread.

She had just sprung up with the intention of flying back as fast as she could to Uncle Cedarmount when, around the curve of another path that led up from the lake, came running another little girl. After a first look, you would not have seen anything to be frightened at in her appearance. In fact, she was smaller than Treasure Flower. Her hair hung in curls that even in the dawn light showed a rich red gold. Her brown eyes just matched her short, brown frock; she wore, instead of *geta,* white stockings and low, buttoned shoes. In short, she was a little American girl, one whom Treasure Flower would impolitely have called a "hairy barbarian." Not that she had ever seen one before; but Uncle Cedarmount had told her about them. It was all on account of them, so

he said, that Lord Fuwa had been murdered in Yedo, and the castle had become an ownerless ruin and the Temple of Benten so poor.

For had these red-headed *oni*[14] not come, only three decades ago, with fire-eating ships such as were never before seen in Yedo Bay, and demanded of the Government the right to settle and to trade; a right strictly denied all foreigners except the Dutch for two hundred and fifty years? Why! at the very cross road to the Castle by which both children had come that morning, still stood the edicts promulgated so long ago, forbidding any Christian to enter and any Japanese to leave the realm on pain of death. Nevertheless, the foreigners had effected an entrance, bringing in their train a bitter civil war. Treasure Flower, carefully versed in Japanese history, could have explained to you that Commodore Perry, who commanded the American men-of-war and demanded the right to trade, never received the permission of the Emperor to do so. What he did receive, because the country was powerless

to resist such force, was permission from the Emperor's time-honored viceroy at Yedo, through his Regent, Hojo-Fuwa, the Lord of the Barrier.

But when he heard of it in his cloistered palace, three hundred miles inland, the Emperor revoked the permission. Then the powerful barons and their fighting men took sides, some with the Emperor, some with the viceroy, styled the Shogun, and at last the Shogun's government fell. With it fell also the feudal system on which it was built, lords, knights, and retainers going down in common ruin before the rising power of the Emperor. So, unwittingly, the Western traders opened not only the fast closed gates of the country, but those of the palace as well. And so, a boy emperor, coming to the Heavenly Throne[15] in 1868, looked beyond the palace walls, the first emperor to do so in many hundred years. He saw a world made new, saw, like the Shogun, that he was powerless to expel the foreigners, and so tolerated them. "We will learn of them,"

said he wisely, "until we are stronger than they."

From this you can understand that distrust and real fright as well, looked out of Treasure Flower's eyes at the little stranger who now came slowly, yet confidently, toward her. "Still," thought Treasure Flower, "it would never do to run away." So she pulled her little *kimono* out of her belt and sat down again sedately to await the worst.

Not until the strange child could have put out her hand and touched Treasure Flower did she stop. For a moment she stood twisting her skipping rope in her hand, as if uncertain what to do.

Then, "Good morning," she said in a clear sweet voice and in Treasure Flower's own tongue. "My name is Lynette Bowne. What is yours?"

Treasure Flower summoned all her courage.

"Good morning," she answered, rising to curtsey. "My name is Treasure Flower."

"That is a pretty name," said Lynette ju-

dicially. "See my skipping rope," she continued. "Father made it for me yesterday. You use it this way." And down the path she flew like a little white and brown bird.

Treasure Flower breathed more easily. "Perhaps she will not come back," was her unspoken hope.

But back she did come. "Don't you want to try it?" she urged. "My papa and mamma and I are staying at the tea house down on the shore. There aren't any other girls down there. Can't you come to breakfast with me? You can play with my dolly—But where do you live?" she broke off, a sudden idea striking her. "Is your mother the Lady of the Castle?"

"I—I haven't any mother," suddenly faltered Treasure Flower, forgetting to be proper, forgetting everything except that she wanted a mother dreadfully. She hid her face in her long sleeve.

"Why, Treasure Flower," cried Lynette, "I believe I've frightened you, and I wouldn't for anything. Oh, don't cry. See, you will spoil

those lovely cherry-flower sleeves. See, I'm going to sit beside you and put an arm round you and tell you I love you, because I do.

"I know," she added sagely as Treasure Flower's sobs ceased and she even let her head rest on Lynette's shoulder, "they've told you I'm an *oni.* And I do have brown eyes and red hair; but I'm only a little girl like you. And I'm dreadfully lonely. Mayn't I play with you?"

So it was that Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount when they reached the castle gate, found Treasure Flower and her new friend sitting side by side, Lynette examining Treasure Flower's butterfly net and Treasure Flower the strange skipping rope. You may know that Uncle Cedarmount was a real gentleman when I tell you that he did not act a bit displeased, nor even surprised. Instead, he and Aunt Lavender invited Lynette to come and share in Treasure Flower's picnic.

Half an hour later, they all stood on the

high hilltop. Below them lay the innermost moat of the castle, a green sea of fluttering lotus leaves. Above these, tiptoe on their tall stalks, rose the buds of the lotus flowers. Pink and white and crimson they flushed, waiting for the first sunbeams. And beyond, over the misty pink of pine-clad hills, the sun was rising. In an instant he tipped with light the silver dolphins on the castle roof, washed the white walls with sudden splendor, and flung a golden glory around the dark blue lake. Uncle Cedarmount and Aunt Lavender, bowing to the east, watched in silent reverence his rising. Only Treasure Flower, looking shyly at the moat beneath their feet, heard the soft bursting of the lotus petals, and saw them loosen their banners to the sun.

Under the shade of a gnarled old pine, the luncheon was then spread. In the top tray of the lacquered lunch box were rice cakes rolled in bean flour; other trays contained pickled plums, boiled eggs, dried fish, and sweetened

bean curd. The long climb and the fresh air gave zest to the appetites of all. Even Lynette as she ate the unfamiliar dishes and drank the rice-wine, thought she had never had a breakfast that tasted so good.

"Have you ever been to the castle before, honorable little mistress?" politely asked Aunt Lavender, as she served her guest with bean curds.

"Many times," she answered, "for Papa and Mamma and I are staying at the tea house right below."

Uncle Cedarmount sighed. He knew the tea house well. There, amid pleasure gardens lovely as a dream, the Lord of the Barrier had been wont to entertain his guests.

"So," he said, "the barbarians—" But he checked himself. "My little Treasure Flower has never been here before, though we live in the foothills not three *ri*[16] away. Perhaps you would like to hear with her some of the stories of the castle."

"About knights and lords and ladies," cried Lynette.

Uncle Cedarmount smiled at his wife. "The children of all lands are alike," he said.

Then as he took them through the hanging gardens, and up the stairs of the ruined keep, he told them how, since the dawn of history, here had stood the barrier-fortress of the fertile valleys of Yamato,[17] an outpost set in the hills to guard against the invasions of the hill folk, the palaces of the Emperors in the peaceful plains below. Centuries later, when the "barbarian-quelling" generals of the Empire had succeeded in pushing the savages ever further north, it still stood, a sentry-garrison, at the junction of two great highways leading from the Heavenly Capital eastward to Yedo on the sea. Here, on the confines of the home provinces, posting bells were inspected and tolls and customs paid. Hither, in the seventh century, the boy-prince Ohotsu hastened in flight from his usurping uncle, to join his father, the

rightful Emperor, and fight with him in the strongholds of the mountains, the battles that at last placed him on the throne.

Through this same Barrier, still five hundred years later the strategic center of turbulent civil wars, passed the outlawed victor, Yoshitsune, disguised by Benkei, his squire, as a servant to some traveling friars. Again, in another five hundred years, another famous general, in another civil war, drew near to the Barrier. The knights who held it were marshalled with thousands of their comrades on the nearby uplands to oppose his advance. There, to a man, they died. And there the victorious Tokugawa-Iyeyasu, only less famous than Yoshitsune, became the Master of all Japan. To him were delivered in turn by the Emperor the title of Barbarian-Queller and the authority to rule the country in his name. He it was who later banished for their political intriguing the European missionaries who came to the country in the seventeenth century, and

he it was who issued the edicts that closed Japan to the world.

In his rise to power, he did not forget his soldiers. Each according to his abilities was rewarded with fief or office under the new régime. To one, of noble birth and noble heart as well, were given the ancient castle and title of the Lord of the Barrier. "Only yesterday, it seems to me," concluded Uncle Cedarmount, shaking his white head as he gazed at the echoing galleries where the knights once discharged arrows like hail upon the besieging foe, "my Lord Fuwa left our castle with a retinue of heralds and outriders and gilded palanquin, to go up to Yedo as Regent to the last reigning descendant of Iyeyasu's line. And now—," he looked at Lynette, apparently so little and so spellbound,—"O little child," he said, "how should you know that you who came in your black ships were the cause of our destruction?"

After he had left them, Lynette's bright

spirits sank. Sensitive to blame as to praise, she understood that in some way she was at fault.

"Tell me," she said suddenly, turning to Treasure Flower, "is that why you were so shy? Didn't you *want* to play with me?"

Treasure Flower looked at her, too, black eyes probing deep into brown. She caught her breath.

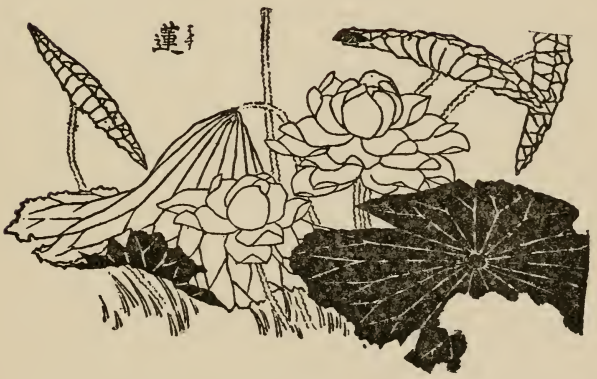
"At first I *was* frightened. But I do want you," she hurried on.

Just then a gorgeous butterfly circled the bright *kanzashi*[18] in her hair. With a deft whirl of her net she caught it. Before it could beat the velvet from its fluttering body, she slipped it into a tiny horsehair cage she had ready in her sleeve.

Still quivering, the butterfly opened and shut its fan-like wings. How they gleamed in the sunlight; gold and azure, with sprinklings of gules like blood drops on lustrous bands of black!

"MY LORD FUWA . . . WITH A RETINUE OF HERALDS AND OUTRIDERS"

Treasure Flower held out the cage to Lynette. "It is the crest of the Hojo, the Lords of the Barrier. Take it for a token—and because I love you," she said.



CHAPTER V

THE HAIRY FOREIGNER

LITTLE Treasure Flower was sick. Whether she had worked too hard over her *haru-ko,* or had breathed in the deadly miasmas from the fever-breeding rice-fields, or had drunk polluted water at the Castle, Uncle Cedarmount and Aunt Lavender did not know, —but at all events she was very, very ill. With burning head and aching back, she lay tossing in her little room, not knowing when her Aunt smoothed her pillow, or her Uncle tiptoed anxiously in and out. Once Benkei, tail between his legs, came and sniffed at her with his cool, wet nose, and pattered away again looking very sad indeed. Even the gold fish in the pond seemed lonesome and swam to the verandah with restless fins as if to look for her.

At first Uncle Cedarmount thought the God-

dess Benten might be angry with him in some way, so he made a special service for her, ringing a clear silver bell and chanting prayers to drive away the evil spirits of sickness. Meantime, in the house, Aunt Lavender burnt fresh incense sticks before the family shrine, and sent up wordless prayers to Treasure Flower's dead mother, to save her little girl.

But by afternoon she was so much worse that Aunt Lavender thought they ought to get the doctor. So, in spite of a pouring rain, Uncle Cedarmount put on his straw storm coat, tied his umbrella-like hat on his head, tucked his cassock well up into his belt, and staff in hand, set off for the village where the doctor lived. Fear winged his feet, and he reached the town in half the time he had taken on the morning of the picnic, only two days before. But the doctor was not at home. There were several cases of sickness, it seemed, in the neighborhood, very like that from which Treasure Flower was suffering. The doctor had gone to attend them. So there was nothing to

do but to wait until he came back. Two o'clock, three o'clock, four o'clock, and the doctor had not returned. Uncle Cedarmount was in despair. It was impossible to sit still any longer. He went to the village temple. A prayer to the Goddess of Mercy would at least do no harm. There he met his friend, the headman of the town.

"Do you know what I would do in your place?" said the latter, who had heard of the priest's trouble. "My wife was taken sick yesterday, and I called in the foreigner who lives at the tea-house. Now you know," he continued, at the look of alarm on Uncle Cedarmount's face, "I am not much in favor of these foreigners, with their strange religion and overbearing ways. But some things they do know more about than we do; and this man certainly knows medicine. My wife is so much better to-day that I came here to offer thanks."

Uncle Cedarmount was not enthusiastic, as you may believe. Just then, to help him out

of his quandary, the doctor's boy came running; the doctor had returned at last.

Without waiting for a whiff of tobacco or a cup of tea, the tired doctor set out with Uncle Cedarmount. For in spite of his living so far from the village, every one respected and loved the good priest. Did he not bless each newborn baby, and pray for them, every one, when in after life anxieties and troubles came upon them? Yes, and he helped in more practical ways too, as in the year of the famine, when he gave half of his own slender supply of millet for the relief of the farmers, and even went up to Yedo to plead for a remission of taxes from their absent lord. Now, as he left the village with the doctor, the children and their elders accompanied him to the boundary, as a silent expression of sympathy.

All night, the village doctor worked over Treasure Flower, now compounding some strange medicines, now feeling her pulse, or again joining Uncle Cedarmount in his

prayers in the temple. All night, Aunt Lavender burned incense to the household gods. And all night, Treasure Flower tossed and moaned, conscious through her burning pain of an added torture in the pungent smell of incense, and the high, clear ringing of the bells. The morning brought no relief. The doctor shook his head. He must go now to his patients in the valley, and at night he would come again.

But in his stead, that afternoon, a tall, red-headed, bearded foreigner strode into the courtyard, and made straight for the temple. The priest, looking up from his prayers, knew at a glance that this must be the American doctor, the father of Lynette. He paused, bowed politely, and waited for the foreigner to speak.

That the latter did, quite as abruptly as he had come. "My little daughter heard yesterday from the village children that her playmate was sick," he said. "I sent her away yesterday with her mother. But I had to promise her first that I would come up here to take care of your little girl."

He was walking toward the house as he talked, and of course Uncle Cedarmount, quite taken by surprise, came with him. In the entry he deftly undid his shoes and handed hat and raincoat to Aunt Lavender, who, her bright eyes brighter than ever, almost forgot to take them in her astonishment. Guided by Treasure Flower's low moans, the doctor found his little patient, and kneeled beside her. That *was* a strange sight; the tossing little figure beneath the quilt; the tall six-foot doctor, his medicine case spread out on the mat beside him; Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount hovering in the verandah, too surprised even to protest. I rather think, though, that Uncle Cedarmount (but he would not have said it aloud), saw something in the doctor's keen blue eyes that made him trust him after all.

But now the doctor had finished his examination. "I would like some boiling water, if you please, Mistress Lavender. And you," he turned to Uncle Cedarmount, "can help me carry the little patient over to the temple."

They were already there and had settled her comfortable in an improvised room bounded by a huge green mosquito net, before he explained, carefully and patiently now, that the temple, being on higher ground and facing south, would give her better air, besides being away from the pond. "And with your permission," he added, "I shall stay here with her until the crisis is over."

So it was that two days later, when Treasure Flower at last opened her eyes, the first thing she saw was the Lady Benten smiling down at her; the next, the dear face of Aunt Lavender, bending closer above her.

With a confused idea that she had turned into a *haru-ko,* she tried to ask Aunty about it. But words seemed somehow very hard things to make, and in the effort she suddenly fell asleep.

Then the doctor came from behind the altar screen, and Uncle Cedarmount from behind the mosquito net, where they had hidden themselves so as not to startle her.

"THE TREASURE SHIP OF BENTEN"

"She will get well now," the doctor whispered. "The crisis is passed."

At that Aunt Lavender's eyes filled with happy tears, and Uncle Cedarmount's throat with lumps almost too big to swallow.

But what was the doctor saying: that he must go now, because the cholera had broken out in the village and he was needed there. Cholera! At the dread name Aunt Lavender's red cheeks grew white, and Uncle Cedarmount leaned hard on his staff for support. That, then, was Treasure Flower's sickness, from that death this stranger had saved her at the risk of his own life.

In vain they urged him to stay and rest an hour or two. A hasty breakfast, a few parting instructions, a promise to be back in the evening, and he was gone.

The Priest watched the doctor's figure grow smaller and smaller, winding down through the ricefields. Gratitude was in his heart, and reverence and wonder. That evening, in the Temple of Benten, a silent prayer went up to

the goddess; a prayer of thanksgiving for the black ships and the hairy foreigners. And as he prayed, a daring thought came into the good Priest's mind. *What if the Black Ships of the foreigners were after all the Treasure Ships of Benten in disguise?*

CHAPTER VI

THE TENTS OF MOUNT HIEI

MORE and more did Uncle Cedarmount wonder at the foreign doctor in the days that followed, when the cholera raged in the village and the surrounding country. The village doctor and many others were killed by it. But still the American staid, going on horseback from hamlet to hamlet, tending the sick, teaching the people to boil their drinking-water and to disinfect their houses. Late at night, he returned to the temple, looked in at little Treasure Flower, snatched a few hours' sleep, and before the dawn was up and away again.

"Treasure Flower," said the doctor on one of these flying visits, "how would you like to go away for a while, up into the mountains, to visit Lynette?"

By this time you may be sure Treasure Flower was no longer afraid of him. Indeed I think she would have done almost anything he asked her to do.

But, "Away from Aunt Lavender?" she asked.

"Yes," Aunt Lavender answered cheerfully (for you see the doctor had talked it all over with her beforehand), "I must stay at home to cook and take care of your uncle and the worshipful doctor."

Treasure Flower felt a queer sinking in her heart, but if she had to go, she must.

"How far is it?"

"Just across the lake to Sakamoto, and up the mountain from there."

"Why, Treasure Flower," put in her Uncle, "we have been as far as that on picnics. Don't you remember the priest of Sakamoto, and how he let his tame monkeys out of their cages to play with you the last time you were there?"

Yes: Treasure Flower did remember. And

between that anticipated pleasure, and the promise that Uncle Cedarmount would row her across the lake himself, and the thought of Lynette, she soon became as cheerful as Aunt Lavender.

But in spite of her good resolutions, she could not help shedding two real, round tears when at last the morning came when she was to start. She was only a little girl after all, and besides she had been sick.

With a jolly laugh, the doctor swung her up into the saddle in front of him. At the clatter of the horse's hoofs, Benkei and Cho-Cho, who had been watching gravely, one on each side of the gate, bounded back into the underbrush. And the little gold fish in the pond (I am sure of this, because Treasure Flower herself told me of it) crinkled their fan-like tails and spread their fins and darted away to the very furthermost corner of the pond. But Aunt Lavender, as long as she could see, stood in the gateway, waving her long sleeve.

Down on the lake shore, Uncle Cedarmount

and the headman of the village were waiting in a boat. Treasure Flower was seated on soft cushions, away up in the prow. Then Uncle Cedarmount poled off, and the headman, standing in the stern, sculled with long, even strokes across the dimpling water. It was quite a long row, but when they were half-way across, a breeze sprang up with the sun, and the two men hoisted a big, square sail. Then, how they went scudding before the wind! Swish, swash! Treasure Flower caught the flying drops of foam in her hands and laughed aloud. She leaned far over the edge, peering into the clear depths. Perhaps she could catch a glimpse of the vermilion walls and jeweled roof of the Dragon Palace that lay at the bottom of the lake. She did see many of the beautiful fish that belong to the Dragon King, crimson-spotted trout, silvery eels, and the stately *koi*,[19] with golden flanks and rainbow crest, who must be a noble of high degree. But before the palace appeared, they had reached the other

shore, and grounded the boat upon a sandy beach.

Then there was excitement. For there, waiting for them, were Lynette and her mother. The priest of Sakamoto was there too, and, yes, a little pet monkey was perched on his shoulder, and another chattered from the stone lantern beside which he stood.

Uncle Cedarmount lifted Treasure Flower out and carried her up the shady path to a thatched pavilion built beside a bubbling spring. Lynette walked on one side and Lynette's mother (at whom Treasure Flower directed several questioning looks before she ventured to smile into the brown eyes that looked so much like Lynette's) on the other. The priest and the headman, accompanied by the monkeys, went on ahead.

Lunch was the next thing on the program; an American lunch for Treasure Flower, Lynette and her mother, and a Japanese one at the priest's house for Uncle Ce-

darmount and his friend. But the monkeys, gambolling back and forth, ate impartially of both. What fun it was to feed them, and see them eat so daintily from their little furry hands!

It must have been while Treasure Flower was napping after luncheon, that her uncle and the headman stole away. At all events, when she woke up, they were not there. Two basket *kago*[20] were waiting by the temple steps to take the party up the mountain. It was the chatter of the bearers that had wakened her.

Lynette's mother had gone to thank the priest for his hospitality. Lynette herself was saying:

"See, you and I are going to ride together in one *kago*. And Mama said we could go first, all the way up."

There was certainly plenty of room for the two girls in their *kago*. Treasure Flower lay at full length, her feet in a little sling, her head propped by soft pillows. Lynette sat be-

side her, swinging her feet over the edge. *"One, two, three,"* two bearers slipped each *kago* from the poles on which they had supported it, to their shoulders. *"One, two, one, two,"* in a swinging trot they started off. The path ascended gradually at first through the temple groves. Looking back, Treasure Flower could see the shimmer of blue lake water between the great trees. Far out, a square sail gleamed white in the hot sunlight. That must be Uncle Cedarmount going home.

Just then the path swerved into a growth of tall grass, taller than the heads of the coolies and almost meeting in a green tunnel overhead. There was a sudden rustling beside them; then, "Oh, see," cried Lynette. Across the path, not two feet in front of them, darted a brown spotted doe, and at her heels a velvety spotted fawn.

"There are pheasants, too," whispered Lynette. "If we keep very still, perhaps we shall see them."

Swing, swing, up went the *kago;* more slowly now because the path grew steep. It certainly was not possible to keep quite so still, even if one did miss seeing the pheasants, in consequence. So presently Treasure Flower was telling Lynette all about the father whom the little American girl missed so very much, away in the village by the lake.

"But he says," concluded Treasure Flower, "that the sickness will soon be over when the weather grows cooler. Then he is coming home."

Good news indeed Lynette thought that. She could not help missing her father, but she was very proud of him too.

"I told him to cure you, and he did, didn't he?" She patted Treasure Flower's thin hand as she spoke.

"Me, and many others," answered Treasure Flower. "My Uncle says he is a very great man indeed."

By now, the path broadened, following a spur of the mountain under giant crypto-

merias [21] that looked like those they had left in the grove of Sakamoto. A flight of lichened steps led up to a terraced plateau. To the left of the path lay the ruins of a once noble monastery. As the bearers paused to breathe, Treasure Flower saw bats already flitting in and out through the gaps in the mossy gables. White lilies grew tall about the rotting gate. High overhead in the tree-tops, unseen monkeys shrieked and chattered. Treasure Flower shivered. She was glad indeed when the path became better traveled, and other temples, in freshly swept enclosures, reared their solid roofs among the trees.

She was gladdest of all when, the last shrine past, they dropped down the opposite slope and came at length to the tents, white-gleaming in the sunset, where Lynette and her people camped. Twenty or thirty in all, they formed the summer homes of the American teachers in Japan's great modern training schools and universities. To one of these, in the Inland

Capital, Lynette's father belonged. With the sanction of the Emperor, they gathered each year amid the ruins of the disestablished Buddhist monasteries on the Sacred Mountain,—a mountain held so sacred that edicts prohibiting the ascent of any woman, still guarded the entrances to the mountain paths.

That night as Treasure Flower lay in her cot, she looked out over the tops of tall cryptomerias, over ravines where the moon turned the night mists to silver, to the wide-spreading valleys of Yamashiro. Away on the left, in a radiance brighter than the moon, gleamed Kyoto, the Emperor's City of Peace. On a mountain across the valley, a huge junk, all of fire, seemed to be sailing, and through the rice-fields wound what might be dragons. They too were traced in flame.

Suddenly Treasure Flower sat up. These were the wonderful sights Aunt Lavender had told she would see on the other side of the mountain, and this was the Night of the Dead.

"SHE LOOKED OUT OVER THE TOPS OF GIANT CRYPTOMERIAS"

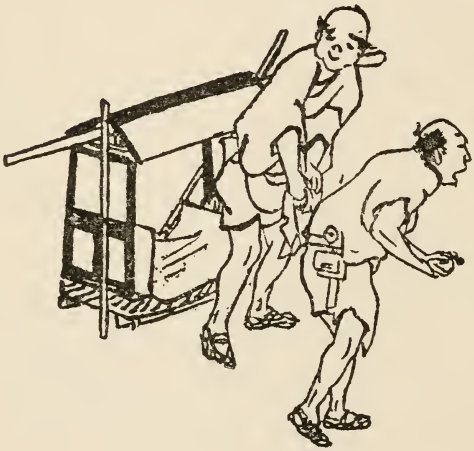
In loving care, the fires had been lighted, and the lanterns were being taken to the graveyards, to light each spirit home. But how would her mother, without a lantern, find her way to her little daughter's bedside, and what would she do when she missed her at the Temple of Benten?

"Mother, Mother," Treasure Flower called softly to the darkness, "I am here. O Lady Benten, O Goddess of the Moon, O great God of the Fire, light my precious mother home!"

Through her dreams, Lynette heard Treasure Flower's call. Sleepily she stumbled across the tent floor, and cuddled in beside her. So it was that an hour later, when Lynette's mother came to see if her two little girls were tucked in, she found them, black hair and red curls, side by side and fast asleep. Softly she kissed each forehead, and softly slipped away.

But only the tree-toads singing high all night in the branches of the cryptomerias, saw an-

other Lady lighted by a ghostly, misty lantern, bend over the two sleepers, and stretch her hands in blessing above their heads.



CHAPTER VII

A RAINY DAY SURPRISE

"RAIN!" Lynette's voice was disgust itself. The fact that it was the first rain in the month of Treasure Flower's visit, made no difference to her.

"Rain!" echoed Treasure Flower, but with a fainter protest.

Even Lynette's mother seemed disappointed. On Hiezan, rain always meant damp and cold. And besides, to-day, an outing had been planned, to Benkei's Spring. The Fosters were to go and the Aldriches, and all the boys and girls whom Treasure Flower had learned to know in her brief sojourn on the mountain. Instead, pitter-patter, pitter-patter, the rain dripped from the cryptomerias, from the tent-fly, even from the verandah railing, making rivulets that cascaded down the steep moun-

tain side. It whirled against the tree trunks, and under the fly too, until at last the tent walls had to be let down.

"No hope of clearing now," said Treasure Flower gloomily, as she came in from the slippery porch.

"No hope of Nancy or Guy coming over either, I know, because their mother won't let them," added Lynette.

Oh, what a stupid day! Of course, Mother tried to read them a story, and they tried to play with dolls. They even exchanged dresses for a diversion; Lynette slipping on the pink cotton band, flowered silk underdress, and striped crêpe kimono of Treasure Flower, and Treasure Flower, with an earnest look, sorting out shirt and waist and petticoat and all the puzzling things Lynette had to wear.

It was when they had just completed this transformation and had gone to show themselves to Lynette's mother, that a sound of feet came stamping and pounding at the door.

"Who can it be?" thought Treasure Flower,

and, "Who can it be?" wondered Lynette. But Lynette's mother, instead of wondering, untied the tent flaps. There on the porch stood two dripping travelers. And yes, one was Lynette's father, and the other Uncle Cedarmount. Then how glad every one was! And how wet every one got in welcoming them! After a rub-down in the bath house (where water piped from a temple spring was always running) and a change of clothes, the two guests sat down before the brazier in the living-tent, ready to talk.

"Well," began the doctor with a merry twinkle, "didn't we give you a surprise?"

"And didn't we give *you* one," answered Lynette from his knee. "You thought I was Treasure Flower, didn't you?"

"No, I did not," laughed her father. "But I must say," and he held her off to look at her, "you make a very nice little Japanese."

The doctor's lady, as Treasure Flower called her, glanced quickly at Treasure Flower. She was no longer in American dress, but sat de-

murely by her uncle, *kanzashi* and scarlet crêpe and fine white sandals giving her a holiday air indeed. Lynette's mother said nothing, but she could not help admiring the feeling that had made her change so quietly, to please her uncle and make him feel more at home.

By this time the kettle on the brazier was boiling, and Mrs. Bowne poured two generous cups of steaming tea.

Uncle Cedarmount took his with a quaint, old-fashioned bow, and sipped it with evident delight.

"But why did you come in such a rain?" asked she.

"I think because we were both homesick," he answered, his eyes on Treasure Flower.

"That was exactly it," agreed the doctor. "The minute the government sent its doctors and nurses to take charge of the cholera, I was eager to get away."

"Yes; and we were eager to have him, because he had grown so tired."

"Tired? Well, I suppose I am," admitted

the doctor. "Still, Mistress Lavender insisted on taking such good care of me that I did not realize it."

"It was you who took care of us." Tears came into Uncle Cedarmount's eyes as he drew his Treasure into his arms. "Some day I can make you both understand better how grateful we are to you and," with a bow, "to your honorable lady wife."

The next day dawned bright and clear, the day when Treasure Flower was to go home. She needed no *kago* this time. Bamboo stick in hand, she stepped out sturdily with her uncle, turning every few steps to wave another good-by to the doctor and his wife, as long as she could see them in the doorway. As for Lynette, she insisted on going part way. How familiar and dear the mountain paths had grown to Treasure Flower in her summer's stay! She looked wistfully at the children's playground, where the swings and tennis courts and croquet squares were empty at this early hour; at the lovely lichened shrine called

the Hall of the Sapphires, where one always stopped to drink from the snow-cold spring; at the mossy ravine down which one day all of the children had waded; and at the ruin beyond, where on another day of exploration they had found behind the high altar an embossed and gilded fan. All too soon they reached the Temple of Shaka,[22] where she must say good-by to Lynette.

Quite like an American little girl, she put her arms about Lynette's neck and kissed her.

"Remember," whispered Lynette with a last quick hug, "you are to come to see me next spring in the city."

Treasure Flower nodded her head. When she looked again Lynette was gone. She knew Lynette could not bear to watch her out of sight. She knew, too, that of all the summer playmates, Lynette would miss her most of all.

Good though it was to be at home that night, and feel Aunt Lavender's arms around her, Treasure Flower was lonesome. Even Cho-Cho and Benkei were a little shy, she had been

away so long, and the baby foxes had grown so big. The gold and silver fish, also, seemed to look at her coldly out of their goggle eyes. Yes, she missed Lynette dreadfully, as if there were a hole in her heart.

"Aunt Lavender," she said at bed-time, when she was once more tucked into her own soft quilts, beneath her latticed window, "did Uncle Cedarmount tell you Lynette asked me to come to see her in Kyoto next spring?"

I think Aunt Lavender's heart ached a little at that. But she only said, "Yes, dear, and you shall go."

CHAPTER VIII

THE WEAVING

"WHY, Aunt Lavender," called Treasure Flower, sliding back the screens from the airy store-room at the back of the house, "where are all the cocoons?"

It was the morning after her arrival, and she was eager for something to do.

"Did you think I was going to wait my spinning for you, child?" Aunt Lavender opened the drawers of a high lacquer press in the corner. Ranged in orderly rows, Treasure Flower saw skeins and skeins of spun floss, gleaming like threads of gold.

"Oh," she said, "and did you spin my cocoons, too?"

"No, little flower, those I saved. You will find them in your own room in the alcove."

There, where she had never thought of look-

ing, she did find them, a pyramid of gleaming yellow, the polished floor on which they lay holding and reflecting in a halo their golden radiance.

"Oh," breathed Treasure Flower again, her cheeks flushing in her unconscious appreciation of their soft beauty, "Aunt Lavender, *may* I begin to spin to-day?"

Half an hour later you might have seen her and Aunt Lavender out on the verandah. A big bowl of scalding water on a brazier stood in front of her; into it she dropped several of the cocoons, and stirred them about with a stick. Some of the floss came off on the end of the stick as she stirred. With Aunt Lavender's help, she separated the fine, fine threads that belonged to each cocoon. One by one, patiently, she passed the threads through a hook on the side of her dish, over a tiny cushion of hair, and fastened them to the wheel at her side. The wheel was no taller than her waist as she sat on her heels beside it, but it turned swiftly, and as it turned, carried the floss in a widening

band of shining yellow. "Hum, hum," sang the wheel; "twitter, twitter," sang the sparrows in the thatch. And on the porch, the sunbeams and the shadows of the pine trees danced in time to their song.

After the spinning came the twisting of the threads together so as to make the woven cloth stronger. At last the silk lay in reels of salmon, cream and yellow, ready for the weaving to begin.

Now the weaving of Treasure Flower's silk was to be a very special performance, quite different from the ordinary, plain weaving Aunt Lavender usually did. It was to be a brocade, and for it Aunt Lavender sent to the city to buy real thread of gold. The pattern Uncle Cedarmount himself selected. It was the very same pattern Aunt Lavender used to weave for the ladies of the castle, when they went up to Yedo, to the Shogun's splendid court,—the butterfly crest of the Hojo, the Lords of the Barrier.

There had been a great deal of consultation

about that pattern, Treasure Flower knew. Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount talked it over in whispers after she was in bed and supposed to be asleep. Of course, it was an important matter, for she was to wear her new dress to the city, to visit Lynette in the spring. But that was not all; the Emperor and the Empress, and the Empress Dowager, and all their court, were coming to the old capital on a visit also. They were to stay in the palaces just across the street from where Lynette lived. Indeed that was to be an occasion memorable in the history of the nation. Not since he left his seclusion in the City of Peace,[23] to take over the real duties of government at Yedo fifteen years before, had the Emperor returned to his ancient home. Never had any Emperor in all the long, long line that stretches back through prehistoric ages to the Sun Goddess herself, shown his face thus to his subjects as he was about to do. And she, Treasure Flower, was to see him. Had not Lynette's father written Uncle Cedarmount all about it,

and asked him and Aunt Lavender to come too?

Even in the village by the lake shore, preparations for the Emperor's progress had been making these many months. But very different they were from those of the olden time when streets were swept and inns were garnished and town dignitaries went forth to do homage many miles along the way. Never again would emperor, lord, or noble travel thus with feudal circumstance the Highway of the Mountains or of the Eastern Sea. Instead, a new road was being made to link the two capitals, a road of steel. Engineers had already taken up their quarters with the headman, and under their directions the villagers were doing their quota of work on the roadbed and the station which was to adorn the town. As they worked, they listened with wonder, and with secret fear, to tales of the thundering locomotives with their miraculous speed. But whatever their disquiet, they kept it to themselves. The Emperor had willed it, and he himself

"IN FRONT OF THE LOOM SITS AUNT LAVENDER"

was coming to open the new railroad in the spring.

The chrysanthemums were blooming in the garden, and the early hoar-frost already lay white on leaf and garden path, before the eventful weaving began. The loom, set up by Uncle Cedarmount, nearly filled the store room. Far at the back glowed a roll of yellow. The horizontal comb stretching from it was a sheet of yellow; and from each thread a string led up to the top of the loom. And see, perched up there, like the fairy of the weaving, is Treasure Flower! Before her is a pattern; and through this the strings are ranged in order ready to her hand.

In front of the loom, with her feet on the treadles, sits Aunt Lavender. She too has a pattern, an invisible, never-to-be-forgotten pattern, in her mind. At her right hand are the smooth worn shuttles, whose threads form a lovely contrast to the broad yellow band of the warp. They are of gold and salmon and cream and buff and black.

"Now," she says to Treasure Flower, bending forward above the gleaming silk.

Treasure Flower felt for a minute as if her heart were in her mouth. The weaving had begun!

Clank, went the loom beneath Aunt Lavender's feet, throwing alternate threads of the warp for an instant above the rest. *Flash,* went a yellow shuttle at the same instant from her right hand, beneath the taut strands, until she caught it in her left. *Clank,* went the loom again, crowding the crossthreads into place, and reversing the strands once more. *Flash,* went the shuttle from left to right, to be caught and sent back once more.

That was simple, but when the pattern began!

"Now," again called Aunt Lavender. This time her feet were free of the treadles. Treasure Flower's hands henceforth supplied their place. Deftly, in accordance with the blocked pattern, she pulled free from the warp a certain number of the yellow strands. Down be-

low, Aunt Lavender's first golden shuttle shot safely through. That was followed by the buff and that by the salmon as the threads were adjusted by patient fingers above and below. But the throwing of the shuttles and the smoothing of the threads were not all Aunt Lavender had to do. There were places in the pattern which called for the complete substitution of buff or salmon for the yellow background, and in these places she tied in from reels, which repeated the colors of the shuttles, the required lengths of floss.

So, all morning, Treasure Flower and Aunt Lavender worked. It was a hard day for Treasure Flower, and it was a pretty tired girl that Uncle Cedarmount helped down from her high perch. But it was a pretty happy girl, too. For there on the loom gleamed the golden-mottled butterflies of the House of Hojo, caught in a sunny net.

Treasure Flower looked intently at them; some with outspread wings of salmon, and others with folded underwings of buff.

She turned eagerly to Uncle Cedarmount. "Is it all right?" she asked, fingering them softly.

He examined them also. "We shall have to leave that to Aunt Lavender to say," he said. "But I should think not a single thread was out of place."

As day after day of weaving followed, Treasure Flower grew more confident, and the shuttles flew even faster, and the gleaming brocade grew.

Sometimes for hours together, Uncle Cedarmount, working in the garden, heard only the measured clank, clank of the loom. At other times, Aunt Lavender's voice floated out to him, singing some old-time spinning song. She sang to Treasure Flower.

CHAPTER IX

AUNT LAVENDER'S WEAVING SONG.

IN the golden chambers of the sun
The Lady Shimmei [24] sat and spun—
From shining head to lily feet,
Goddess she was, yet earthly sweet
With dimpled cheek and drooping mouth,
Fragrant and warm with the breath of the south.
On a dais of carven ivory
O'erhung with dawn, alone sat she,
And threads of gold and threads of blue
Swift from her gleaming fingers flew,
Till the whirr of her wheel, like a humming-bird,
The spacious silence sweetly stirred;
And in the heart of the Goddess woke
An ancient song of the spinning folk:—

From the morning dew
On the grassy plain,
The spider spins
Her silken skein.

My maidens, haste!
The night grows wan,
Comes swift the silver dawn.

The silkworm in
The gray leaf's fold
Nets now her hammock's
Mesh of gold.

My maidens, haste!
The tree tops stir
And bird-wings lightly whir.

And in the sun
Our Lady fair
Weaves the new day
From her shining hair.

"THE LADY SHIMMEI"

My maidens, haste!
The skies are bright
With day; soon comes the night.

The Goddess sang, and far and near
Echoing voices answered clear
As trooping sunbeams manifold
Slipped to each bench of burnished gold
And wrought in the warp of sunny hue
A patterned woof of wavering blue.
Then flash of shuttle and clank of loom
And lightsome laughter filled the room,
And shaking motes of amber mist
Rose to the raftered amethyst,
Or drifting through the casements wide,
Ebbed in a quivering rainbow tide.
Fair o'er the earth hung the shining veil,
O'er misty hill and river dale,
With here and there a rifting view
Of rice fields set in green and blue
Or *torii,* flaming sentinel.
Now and again a temple bell
Silvery soft the silence broke

Or ere the day to toil awoke;
And tottering forth, the white-haired priest
Bowed him low to the radiant East.
"Our Lady of Life and Giver of Day
August in Heaven, to Thee we pray.
For spring-time bloom and harvest gold,
For the green earth and the blue sea's fold,
For the garment of Thy loveliness,
Goddess of Light, Thy name we bless!"

CHAPTER X

THE CITY OF PEACE

AUTUMN turned to winter, and winter at last to spring. One gusty March morning, Treasure Flower again bade farewell to her friends at the temple. Again Cho-Cho and Benkei and the young foxes, now quite grown, watched her departure. Again Aunt Lavender stood at the gate and waved her sleeve. It was easier to say good-by the second time than the first, especially when she thought of Lynette and the wonderful events in the city she was going to see. But she did wish Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount had not changed their minds at the last moment about going with her. Most of all did she wish it when it came to leaving Uncle Cedarmount. He had brought her as far as the railroad station in the village; the station just

completed, on the line that would soon connect the old capital with the new.

On the platform among the crowd, the headman and his wife were also waiting. It was in their company that Treasure Flower was to travel. The wife was a motherly soul. She had seen a number of trains already and had heard a great deal about them from the engineers who were putting through the road.

"They are a trifle noisy, but they won't hurt you, and once you are inside you will quite like the motion."

The whistle of the locomotive waked the echoes. In an uproar of grinding brakes and escaping steam, Treasure Flower was parted from her uncle and hurried on board. A last glimpse of him, a long backward look at the castle, where for some reason workmen seemed to be busy, and she was borne into the unknown.

As for Lynette in the city, she too waked with the dawn; yes, even before the dawn, when the hundreds of temple bells called one

to another through the darkness, and the sandaled feet of the market-men, bringing in their baskets of vegetables, made a rustling through all the narrow streets. She was up before the ravens left their roosts in the camphor trees of the Empress-Dowager's garden, or the neighbors slid back their rattling wooden shutters. For last night had come a letter from Aunt Lavender. Treasure Flower would be here to-day!

At noon, after a long, long morning, Treasure Flower finally arrived. Cherryfield, the gardener, was on hand to swing back the leaves of the carriage gate, so that her *jinrikisha* [25] could come straight up the gravelled path to the door. There, on the rose-hung verandah, Lynette and her mother welcomed her, Lynette first, of course, because she could not wait.

It seemed to Lynette as she looked at Treasure Flower, bowing daintily before her mother, as if not a single hair, nor a single fold of her brown dress or sash were out of place. But

evidently Treasure Flower thought differently. Not until she had bathed and dressed again from top to toe was she ready to forget ceremony and to chatter with her friend.

All too soon came mother's call to dinner, a merry meal indeed. But after dinner such a disappointment! Big snowflakes began to flutter and break against the windows and then to settle down in the regular, business-like way that snowflakes have when they intend to keep it up all day. No visit to barn or garden or tennis court that afternoon.

"At least," said Lynette after a momentary clouding of her face, "it is good you were not caught in it. And there is lots to see inside."

Treasure Flower found there was. First the doctor's study, which he showed them himself. Instead of books, the walls were lined with cases of rare stones and minerals; carved jades from China, crystals of amethyst, topaz and rose quartz; steel-colored antimony, gold

and silver, and copper in velvety masses of green and blue. In another case were butterflies with wings like prisms. Among them Lynette pointed out the crest of the Hojo in glittering azure, red and gold.

"But it is not the one you gave me," she whispered. "I keep that in my collection upstairs."

From the upper porch, off which Lynette's room opened, Treasure Flower could get quite a glimpse of the yard and garden that Lynette was so anxious to show her,—the level lawn in front broken only by one gnarled quince tree in flower, and the well beneath it with its graceful, rustic roof. To the right the fine snow beat against a black fence and tipped with whiter bloom the still flowering plum trees that drooped above it, and bent the glossy leaves of the *botan* [26] hedge below.

"There," explained Lynette, pointing to a villa on the other side, "live our neighbors the 'flowery nobles,' [27] who belonged to the Em-

peror's court. And across the street, where you can just see those high-shuttered lattices and great camphor trees, is the palace of the Empress Dowager."

Treasure Flower gazed long at that grey shuttered building, trying to people it with the gay life, of which Aunt Lavender had told her, of the days before the Court deserted the City of Peace, and the Son of Heaven [28] took up his residence in the Castle in Yedo that the Barbarian-quelling Commander of his armies, the Shogun, had built.

Even inside, the glamor of near-by royalty still held Treasure Flower's imagination. There Pomegranate, the sewing woman, sat by an open fire making Lynette's new dress. As she worked, setting a fold here, and a shirring there, she told them tales of times, not distant in years, yet passed irrevocably with the passing of feudalism. In those days, Pomegranate's father was a two-sworded *samurai,* and she herself wore in her girdle the dagger that every high born maiden carried for her

honor's sake. Her feudal lord, like many another patriot in the months succeeding Perry's expedition, was opposed to admitting the foreigners; and it was only after a conflict that left his castle in ruins that he was brought to see the error of his ways. Thus it was that Pomegranate became a servant to the Barbarians.

But the story Treasure Flower and Lynette liked best and asked for again and again in the month that followed, told of the hero Yoshitsune, cherished by every *samurai* boy and girl. Many of the scenes lay before their very eyes, within a stone's throw of the gate. Indeed, who knew but that Yoshitsune's mother that wintry night she fled from her husband's murderer, may not have crossed this very yard into the shelter of Shokokuji? At least, Pomegranate so surmised the first time she told them the story. Outside, the sunset was painting in cold, bright red the clearing sky; for the rest, the long panels of the windows were filled with the pink-tinted snow of cherry branches

and the bowed bamboos of the temple groves of Shokokuji, swaying with the western breeze.

"It was on such a night as this," she began, "only later, and darker, and colder, oh, bitter cold, that the Lady Tokiwa stole away from the Minamoto Palace. On either hand a little boy clung to her long sleeves and in her arms she carried a third, her baby, Yoshitsune. Only a few months before, the Lady Tokiwa had been the sheltered wife of one of the lordliest nobles in all the land of Yamato; but the great Prime Minister, to whom he had sacrificed all save honor, became at length so intolerable in his demands that no course was left except revolt. Resistance came too late. He was assassinated, and his family, by decree of the tyrant, given over to be blotted out. Perhaps the warm peasant blood that beat in the heart of his widow made possible her escape. At all events, she fled by night northward, and at length found pity and shelter with one of the vassals of her enemy. But her sorrows, poor lady, were yet to have no end; she

"ON SUCH A NIGHT THE LADY TOKIWA STOLE AWAY"

was told that the cruel Taira had thrown her mother into prison, hoping in this way to draw her back into his power at the Capital. She did return, not as a fugitive or a mourner, but in all the power of beauty that rich robing and jewels could lend. She gave herself, a priceless ransom to her captor; and the lives of her mother and her sons were the reward of her sacrifice. But they were separated from each other and from her. She never saw them again.

"You have been to Kurama mountain in the spring," Pomegranate continued, "when the azaleas flame along the foothills, and the pines, tipped with fresh, green shoots, make an altar of incense before the temple. It was to Kurama mountain that Yoshitsune was sent, in the dead of winter, to be cared for by priests and brought up as an acolyte in the monastery. The priests had their hands more than full with their task, for he was no monk by disposition, but the son of his father's house, chafing at restraint, and born to be a leader. From his

mother, too, he inherited a love of freedom and of the open that drove him on many a starry night to forbidden rambles outside the monastery walls. For his strength and daring the monks named him Young Ox, and told in after years, when he had in truth become a great hero—as you were told the other day beneath the old cedar tree—how one night he encountered there the *Tengu*[29] who promised to help him to his heart's ambition: the destruction of the House of Taira, his father's foes.

"A certain goldsmith came often to the monastery, for in those times the monks were both warlike and rich, and had use as well for inlaid sword hilts as for altar services. This man was won by Yoshitsune's frank, manly ways. With him Yoshitsune made his escape. The two traveled northward, many miles, Yoshitsune proving his courage in a great battle with robbers on the way, until they came to the Province of Mutsu, and to its Lord. He was no lover of the heavy-handed Taira, and

moreover did not fear them in his far northern stronghold. He gladly took the young Minamoto into his household. Here Yoshitsune learned all those accomplishments in archery, horsemanship, and the wielding of his two-handed sword that every knight should know. He learned, too, to be courtly in hall as well as in tourney, to read the classics, and to write in the characters of the gentle-born the poetic thoughts that till then had been only vague stirrings in his blood. So he grew to be the model of knighthood, then as now.

"All this time the hatred of the Taira had been growing in the hearts of the nobles and of their vassals throughout the realm. Yoshitsune's elder brother had organized a well-planned revolt against them, and called on those of his family who had escaped the sword to help in putting down the tyrant. This seemed the duty of patriots as well, in order that the Emperor might be freed from the usurpations of an upstart clan. Thus great

armies were gathered which marched beneath the white standards of the Minamoto upon the Capital. I am not going to tell you how the Taira were outgeneraled and utterly put to rout; only this, that some twenty-eight years after his mother's flight, Yoshitsune returned to his birthplace at the head of his victorious armies. He had won the terrible battle of Dan-no-Ura, and the Taira were no more.

"One would think that Yoshitsune's brother, who had kept well out of most of the fighting in his Palace at Kamakura, would have thrown wide his city gates to welcome the conquerer when he came from the western Capital with his retinue to lay his honors at his brother's feet. All along the way his progress was a triumph; for Yoshitsune's valor had become a song in the mouths of the people. He was their idol, and their deliverer. Because of this, the heart of his brother hardened against him in jealous rage. He made haste to stay the victor with an edict forbidding him to enter the city. The grief of Yoshitsune, gener-

ous as brave, was great; he wrote his brother begging that he would not give heed to evil reports against him, and assuring him of his loyalty and devotion—a letter that even to-day moves the heart to tears. But Yoritomo was not moved. So Yoshitsune turned his back on the stretch of sea that still separated him from his brother's castles—neither so wide nor so deep as the gulf between their souls—and came sorrowfully to Kyoto once more.

"In this dark hour, councilors were not wanting to whisper to him of revenge, nor others yet more dangerous to lure him to forgetfulness. We honor Yoshitsune most, perhaps, because in that pleasure-loving time and place, where corruption had become an art, he kept the faith of a *samurai.* Many stories are told of the adventures of Yoshitsune and his famous squire, Benkei, at this time, but they are those of prowess alone. This Benkei was formerly a bandit, and chose as his lurking place of an evening the Bridge of Sanjo, still in the heart of the city's traffic. At midnight,

however, with the fear of Benkei abroad, it was a deserted spot enough. Here one moonless night, came Yoshitsune loitering as if from an over-late banquet. Benkei fell upon him. Then for hours the keen steels leaped and darted. Slowly the knight forced the robber backward, until another in his place would have begged for mercy. Benkei instead threw down his sword and besought Yoshitsune to take him into his service. "For," said he, "none other has ever bettered me at sword-play." Afterward, wherever the hero went, there went his squire also, and great deeds of strength and skill they did.

"But Yoritomo's jealousy could not allow his brother to remain long in Kyoto. He sent forth an edict of banishment against him; an edict that made it treasonable to harbor him in any province of the realm. For a second time Yoshitsune fled from the Capital northward, his faithful Benkei with him. It was Benkei who deceived the sentries at the Barrier and fought whenever there was need, till at length

he brought his master again to Mutsu, and to its lord. Now, by this time, the Lord of Mutsu was old and a lover of peace. Yet he received the fugitives gladly, and sheltered them loyally until his death. Then it was that his son played the part of a villain, and set assassins on Yoshitsune, perhaps for the prize money, or for fear of Yoritomo, or both. Some say that the hero thus perished wretchedly. So the base Lord of Mutsu claimed. He, however, reaped the reward of a traitor, and died a victim of Yoritomo's well feigned anger. Others have it that Yoshitsune, in bitterness but yet in honor, took his own life. Others, whom we would fain believe, maintain that he escaped with Benkei from his perfidious host, crossed the bleak land of Yezo to Mongolia, and there became once more a mighty conqueror, whose name is Ghengis Khan."

With that name of dread, Pomegranate's story ended. She rose in conscience-stricken haste to stir the fire and fold up the sewing that she still held in fingers unaccustomed to such

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idleness. But Lynette and Treasure Flower sat spellbound, watching the red and white banners of the Taira and the Minamoto as they battled in the flames.

CHAPTER XI

A ROYAL ENCOUNTER

"MOTHER, Mother." Lynette's voice, naturally high pitched, was rasped to an edge by excitement.

For an hour the two girls had been closeted with Pomegranate, while they made their toilets. It was almost time for the foreign colony to start for the station, to see the royal visitors arrive. Already the other members of the great university faculty and their families had begun to gather. Mrs. Bowne excused herself and ran upstairs.

In the center of the room stood Treasure Flower. The black lacquered clogs upon which rested her dainty feet, added fully three inches to her height; the golden butterfly of her *kanzashi* towered two inches above her black hair. Her slight figure, seeming so much the more

slender for its added height, was sheathed in gold brocade. A quilted lining of pale pink showed at the bottom, and in the long, drooping sleeves. An underdress of crimson peeped out at neck and wrist and hem. The whole costume was caught together at the waist in a glorious sash of crimson and black and gold and azure, held in place by a narrower crimson band. Into the sash was tucked a fan; the fan that the children had found in the old temple on Mount Hiei.

Mrs. Bowne caught her breath. Where had she seen such a dress? Before her eyes floated hazily the picture of a pavilion in a garden of peonies. Above the flowers hovered a host of butterflies, and above the butterflies soared the graceful roof of the tea house by the lake. On gable and ridge and eaves the same gorgeous butterflies seemed to hover; they were imprinted on the tiles. Suddenly she remembered.

"The crest of the House of Hojo!" she exclaimed. Treasure Flower fluttered an ac-

knowledgment in her low obeisance. Beyond her, Mrs. Bowne's eyes caught the watchful eyes of Pomegranate. Pomegranate's finger was laid on her lips.

You can imagine for yourself what a flurry Treasure Flower made among the children and their elders when she made her appearance downstairs. All the other girls' dresses, Lynette's persimmon-flowered mull, Nancy's blue poplin, and even Sara's real lace, made from her mother's wedding dress, faded into commonplace. The boys, awkward at best in Sunday knickerbockers and shiny black shoes, actually gasped in astonishment.

"Whewew," whistled Philip, as Treasure Flower took her place in a jinrikisha beside Lynette, and unfolded a yellow-spoked sunshade. "She's a princess herself, I'll bet."

"Look at the balcony of our flowery neighbors, if you doubt it," added Guy. Sure enough, the "flowery family" had deigned for once to honor the Barbarians with its attention. They stood in a row by the railing, grave

noble, lady and gayly dressed children. But they were looking not at the hated foreigners, but at their own little country-woman, with evident concern.

In the spacious square of the great Buddhist Cathedral-Temple of Hongwanji, from which the Imperial highway leads straight and broad through the heart of the city to the south gate of the palace, stood an arch of welcome. Its pillars were of the glossy-leaved camellia; its emblazonment their wax-like flowers. High in the center they wreathed the heraldic crest of the Emperor, a golden chrysanthemum. Above floated the banners of the Rising Sun. Beneath, kept back by the drawn swords of the police, surged the people, scarcely believing even yet that their Emperor, whose ancestors ruled as gods "within the curtain," would show himself to them.

Directly beside the arch was the place allotted by the police to the "distinguished foreigners." No longer an object of interest, Treasure Flower stood in the front row beside

Lynette. There was no band and no shouting; but quietly across the thronged square came riding marshals and outriders in flashing uniform. Then, in the midst of a hush that expressed as no shouting could have done the reverence of the people, the Empress drove slowly by. She sat alone in an open landau, her dress a crimson brocade of flowing lines, her hair caught up with a jeweled fillet whence it fell in a black mist down her back. Such, in spite of foreign fashion, was still the ceremonial dress of a royal princess. Other ladies, similarly attired, followed. Last, came the Emperor, a far less picturesque figure in uniform and gold braid and glittering decorations. Bowing to right and left as a European ruler might have done, he passed on out of sight.

It was all over very quickly and uneventfully. But when Lynette, round-eyed with curiosity and wonder, turned to Treasure Flower, she saw the tears slowly brimming over and running down her cheeks. As the little American girl looked at the crowd around her,

just beginning to raise their heads from the literal adoration of their heaven-born Ruler, she saw the same expression of reverence in their eyes. To Treasure Flower and to her people it seemed indeed as if a god had condescended to them; more than that, as if the very sun, the source of their being, had shone upon them in human form.

But the progress of the Emperor and of his consort did not end the happenings of that memorable day. The Empress-Dowager had not yet made her entry into the city.

In the servant's quarters, Lynette had learned that this most royal lady not only disapproved of the foreign ideas that were revolutionizing the Court, she refused absolutely to take any part in this "foreign parade."

"Why," said Pomegranate, "she can remember the time when the Heaven-Born [30] rode through these very streets in a bullock-cart, with close drawn curtains, and she herself was carried in her shuttered palanquin."

"So can we," quietly added Cherryfield. "In

those days we veiled our faces in the dust before them."

"But now you bow your hearts, is it not so?" asked Lynette, remembering the hush and reverence of the upturned faces in the great Hongwanji Square.

Cherryfield's eyes grew thoughtful. "Perhaps you are right," he said.

The Empress-Dowager, however, from the dim recesses of the palanquin in which she rode through the lantern-hung streets of the city, could not have seen this change. Perhaps she did not see either the park that stretched in grassy wastes where in former years the mansions of the nobles had clustered closely about the Imperial Palace. Nor was she troubled that no silent throngs of subjects waited for her passing. Late in the afternoon, almost unnoticed she stole to her palace. Only a group of children watched her; the children of the hated foreigners. As her cortège circled the cottage on the outskirts of the enclosure, to which she had come in former years

a bride, the bamboo curtains of the palanquin stirred and were lifted. A pair of eyes still bright and unflinching looked out on pebbled court and garden; then they fell on Treasure Flower. In gold and crimson, the living seal of a traitor-house, she glowed against the gate. It was only for an instant. Like a crumpled butterfly she swayed to the earth. The other children scattered. But Lynette, frightened yet resolute, remained staring back at the strange, white-clad, ghostly woman who seemed to have pierced her lovely playmate with her black, angry eyes.

"Where do you live, and what is your name?" The sharp voice of a policeman recalled Treasure Flower to her senses.

It was Lynette who answered. The officer wrote in silence and solemnly clanked away.

That night Lynette came creeping once more into Treasure Flower's bed. She had told no one of their adventure, and the weight of it hung heavy on her heart. She knew, though the policeman had not deigned to say

so, that he would return. Without doubt he would take Treasure Flower away. Now she remembered how Pomegranate had tried to beguile them with stories. And what had mother said about going to the North Gate, but under no circumstances beyond? *Had they known of any special danger?*

Oh, the Empress-Dowager's eyes! They pursued her in the darkness. Yet it was not at her they looked. They searched for Treasure Flower.

CHAPTER XII

SHOOTING THE RAPIDS

BUT Lynette slept softly, long before Treasure Flower's tossing head was still.

Through it passed again the pageantry of the royal progress, the unthinkable condescension of her Emperor. Through it too, like a tangled thread in the otherwise bright pattern, ran the displeasure of the Empress-Dowager. That she, an ignorant village girl, had attracted the unfavorable attention of so august a lady, —surely no good could come of it. But why had she been dressed to attract attention? And why had Uncle Cedarmount and Aunt Lavender sent her alone to the great City? She knew enough, to realize that the ancient clan to which she belonged was in actual disfavor with the reigning monarch. She remembered Uncle Cedarmount's story on the

castle ramparts, of how the Lord Fuwa had met a traitor's death because he disregarded the Emperor's commands not to admit the foreigners. Only last month, as the train carried her past the fortress, she had seen stone cutters busy quarrying huge blocks from the crumbling walls. Yes, the House of Hojo had fallen. Yet—over by the window the moonlight touched with living radiance the emblazoned butterflies on her gala dress, not yet folded away. Lightly the soft wings stirred and lifted and fluttered from their brocaded cage. Out into the silver night they flew, across the lawn, above the street where the sleepless sentry paced, above the camphor trees, to settle in a starry rain on the shadowy roofs of the Emperor's palaces.

The morning sun was already high when Treasure Flower awoke. Instead of the golden butterflies, a little plum flowered crêpe was thrown over the chair by the window. Pomegranate, who had evidently been waiting for her, was just closing the door.

"Do not go, Pomegranate," she called. "See, I am awake now."

"It is time, honorable little mistress," Pomegranate answered. "The bath has been ready an hour! And the picnic party has gone!"

"Gone, Lynette gone!" Suddenly she remembered the excursion to see the cherry blossoms and run the rapids of Arashiyama, that was to start at sunrise.

Scampering up the stairway and clattering into the room ran Lynette. "Indeed, no; I would not go without you. And mother said Pomegranate might bring us with two runners to catch up. As soon as you are ready we can start."

You may be sure Treasure Flower did not linger. Half an hour later two coolies, fastened tandem-wise to a light single jinrikisha wherein sat Pomegranate, darted down the gravel drive and out into the street. They were followed by two others with a second jinrikisha containing Treasure Flower and Lynette. Noiselessly the well-oiled wheels

"THE ROAD WINDS THROUGH CHECKERED ACRES OF RICE"

and the sandaled runners bore them past the frowning walls of the palace, along narrow streets of gala-decked shops, on through the silk-weaving quarter where one hears within paper shutters always the clack, clack of many looms, past temples in gravel swept courtyards, and so out into the fields. Here the road like a white ribbon winds through checkered acres of rice, at this season under water, past patches of yellow rape with its pungent, spring-like odor, around the curve of some pine-clad hill, or under the feathery arch of a cool, green bamboo grove. And here the coolies ran their bravest. Helter skelter, out of the way as they came, hurried other merry makers, either in jinrikishas or on foot. As her runners flashed by, Treasure Flower eyed with delight the gayly dressed city children with their wonderful head-dresses of crinkled scarlet and nodding silver pins, their embroidered purses and dainty parasols. But it was not till they reached the river itself and threaded their way among the many picnic booths beneath the

cherry trees that they spied their own party at last. From the high bank on the opposite shore, Nancy and Guy were waving frantically; and yes, there were Lynette's father and mother and everybody else.

It did not take long to cross the bridge nor to start with the rest on foot along the mountain path to the head of the rapids. At every turn there was a fresh view of the beautiful cherry groves that, set in a frame of green pines and pink-tipped maples, have made the river bank famous. In places, far below, could be heard the roar of the water, in others the river widened to reflect its flowery garlands in a winding lake. There were wild flowers and moss and lichens to gather, and coaxing ravines to follow, until at last, tired and hungry, the children arrived at the tea house at the head of the rapids, where luncheon was served.

No basket picnic was this. Cherryfield had been sent on ahead to attend to that. On the

polished verandah overlooking the first ripples of the rapids, tea house girls in their pretty dresses were ready to wait on the foreigners as soon as the ladies of the party arrived. They, it seems, had grown tired of the winding trail and were being brought up by boat. At last,—"There they are," shouted Lynette dancing up and down, as a dark prow nosed around the nearest curve, and,—

"There they are," echoed Guy, pointing not at the boat, but at a group of boatmen on the path who were towing it up stream.

"All together, pull the prow," the boatmen chanted as they drew the wet rope taut. "All together, now!" merrily echoed the narrow valley, welcoming them home.

How, I wonder, would you have enjoyed the luncheon? Not so well perhaps, as Treasure Flower, who knew exactly the way to sip her egg soup, shred the crisp, broiled trout with her chopsticks, and manage quite daintily her bowl of steaming rice.

But on this particular picnic the luncheon was not the main thing. The boatmen had scarcely time to finish their simpler meal and snatch a whiff or two at their pipes when the children descended on them.

Guy, boy fashion, scrambled aboard with the distinct intention of taking up his station in the prow.

But the Doctor was on the lookout for that. "Guy, ladies first," he said quietly. And at that Guy, just as if he had meant to all the time, helped Treasure Flower to the seat of honor. Lynette and Nancy were stowed in beside her, the ladies in the middle on the wide, flat bottom, and the boys, who quite refused to associate with petticoats now, in the stern.

> Scull at stern, quick shove at prow,
> All together now,

chanted the boatmen, and the boat pushed off.

"Saiyonara, saiyonara,"[31] waved the tea girls.

"Saiyonara," cried the voyagers, and the shooting of the rapids had begun.

At first, the motion was a lazy, lapping one as the boat slipped quietly into the stream. Then, around a bend, sudden white caps appeared, and the river, like a giant, caught the boat and flung it headlong down a whirling flume. Treasure Flower held her breath in a sharp gasp as the boat plunged; the boatman in the prow shouted a warning, the sternsman gave a deft touch with his pole to an angry looking rock, and the boat glided out from the boiling torrent into a long lagoon.

For an hour the descent continued with alternate excitement and calm, till they came to the last and swiftest rapid, set with seething rocks. By this time, Treasure Flower had got used to the dizzy swaying and the roar of the angry spray. Lynette and the other children, who shot the rapids every spring, shouted back at the roaring water, and she joined in their sport. Then suddenly, something happened.

All she knew was that she seemed to be tossed like the flying foam among the hissing waves. I do not think she ever knew much more than that about her wonderful escape. But the Doctor told me, years after, that the heavily freighted boat struck a glancing blow on a hidden snag. Treasure Flower, lightly balanced, was thrown straight into the stream. For an eternity no one moved. Then Cherryfield leaped over the side. When the Doctor looked again, there he was standing on a rock in midstream and holding Treasure Flower in his arms. How, with the help of ropes flung to him, he reached the shore with his precious burden, it would take too long to tell. But when he did, the Doctor, looking very white indeed, once again knelt beside the child and worked to save her life. Lynette, sobbing, was led away by Pomegranate. But Treasure Flower, wrapped in the Doctor's great coat, rode home in his arms. Of that long, long ride, she could still tell you a great deal; of the

cries of the runners that sounded so loud in her ears, the flare of the dancing lanterns, the swiftly moving shadows, and at last the lights of home.

CHAPTER XIII

A LADY'S VISIT

IF Treasure Flower were a make-believe heroine, perhaps you might think it very stupid of her to be sick so much of the time. As it is, we have no choice; I can only tell you what she and Lynette and the good Doctor have told me. She lay many days in bed, conscious at intervals of the green and white screen of rose vines fluttering at her windows, of soft footfalls and of a grinding pain. It was not alone that the icy water had chilled her to the heart, the cruel rocks had bruised her spine. How tender were the doctor and his wife in caring for her; how tireless Pomegranate's quick hands and quicker feet! Even Lynette, who knew herself that Providence never intended her for a nurse, slipped in and out on tiptoe with bouquets of violets or cherry blossoms or roses. Of course, anxious

faced Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount came too. But sometimes in spite of the longing for them that worried Treasure Flower, she kept wondering who in their absence was taking care of the foxes and the goldfish and the Lady Benten.

Unknown to Treasure Flower, other visitors, very important to judge from their goldlaced uniforms and the presents they always brought, came each morning now to inquire for her. Indeed, some of the lovely flowers Lynette carried to the invalid, and the delicate wines and fruits that appeared, to tempt her appetite, were their gifts. How surprised she would have been to see one of the most distinguished-looking of these callers step into the doctor's study for a long conference one day. And how more than surprised to hear him call for Uncle Cedarmount and Aunt Lavender, who came forthwith, bowing till their wrinkled foreheads touched the floor. Lynette saw and heard a great deal not meant for her those days, but she was a loyal soul and kept her

own counsel. Besides, had she not a heavy secret of her own? She had told no one, not even Pomegranate, of the encounter with the Empress-Dowager. Some connection she was sure there must be between that event and these extraordinary visits. Were they really friendly to her playmate? She would wait and see.

Lynette had forgotten that after the all too brief spring holiday, school would begin again. Never had the little stucco school-house on the edge of the temple grove seemed so far away as on the first morning when she left Treasure Flower behind. She had counted so on taking her along and showing her a real American school. One thing at least she had to be thankful for,—the teachers were the other children's mothers, in fact they were all just the picnic party turned into a classroom. There were no curious questions to answer. Everybody knew what had happened and everybody was sorry for poor little Treasure Flower.

At the noon recess and at the close of the session, how Lynette's feet flew down the bamboo-bordered lane, through their peasant neighbor's peach orchard, over the wall and home! It was not for nothing she was known as the fleetest runner in the school. Breathless, but still very quietly, she peeped in at the bedroom door. Yes, Treasure Flower was still there, and sometimes she was awake. As the days passed she gradually grew better, till Lynette could come in and sit by the bedside and even talk to her. What happy afternoons those were! With what delight Treasure Flower listened to the wonder tales of nature and history and geography that Lynette had to tell! How interested she was in hearing about the desks and the blackboards, the arithmetic and the spelling-matches, of all of which she had never heard before. She told Lynette in turn of the quiet temple study where Uncle Cedarmount taught her so patiently to write, or read to her from the Chinese classics quaint legends of saints and emperors; she told

of the long winter evenings when Aunt Lavender brought out her harp. Then the dim light of the *andon* threw on the white screened walls her fantastic figure as she danced to Aunt Lavender's music the stately dances of the *No*.[32] For, she confided to Lynette, she was trained to be a girl attendant on her beloved Goddess, and danced sometimes in her honor on the days of her festivals.

One afternoon as the two girls were thus engaged, a gentle tap sounded on the door. Lynette ran to open it. The doorway framed a lady she had never seen before; a slight, black-haired Japanese lady, who smiled prettily at the foreign child and asked if she might see Treasure Flower. Lynette's heart bounded to her mouth. Fantastic as she knew it was, it seemed to her that in this strange lady, so dignified, so imperious in spite of her sweet voice and slight stature, the Empress-Dowager stood before her. She looked again; no this was a younger lady, with kind, not angry eyes,—and of course it was absurd to have imagined any

such thing, and of course Treasure Flower would be only too honored to see her.

"Would not the illustrious lady enter?"

The lady did, with just the least trace of hesitation, scanning Treasure Flower anxiously as she advanced.

The child from her pillow looked up at her with startled eyes. She too knew from the lady's bearing as well as from her dress, though it was only the softest of grey shadowed crêpes, that her visitor was not of ordinary rank.

"Honorable Lady, I beg of you to pardon me for not making a suitable obeisance, and I pray you be seated," she said.

A faint smile of amusement lurked in the corners of the lady's mouth as she took the offered seat, a smile that quickly melted into pity at closer sight of the still figure in the bed beside her.

"So," she said softly as if speaking to herself (and to judge from her voice her thoughts were pleasant ones), "so this is Treasure

Flower. I heard of you, dear child," she continued, "through the august mother of our Emperor, who, as you know, is now a neighbor of yours. I knew well your lady-mother in the days before she was married to your father. In fact I used to play with her when I was just your age."

"You—knew—my—mother." The child's voice stumbled at every word. No one, not even Aunt Lavender, had been able to tell her anything of the mother whom unseen and unknown she had been taught to adore. All her heart's longing sat in her eyes.

The lady regarded her earnestly for a moment, and Treasure Flower saw two tears steal down her cheeks. She did not wipe them away; I do not think she knew they were there.

"In those days she too was my neighbor. Her father's house adjoined my father's and both stood not far from here. Your grandfather was not a rich man; we were all poor together then. Sometimes we were even hungry, and I can remember well when Princess

"IN THE BEAUTIFUL OLD HOUSES WE CALLED OUR HOMES"

Plum Blossom (that dear, was your mother's name) and I went sometimes to the woods to gather mushrooms or chestnuts, not at all for fun, but because our illustrious parents were too poor to buy them in the markets. Yet we had a happy childhood in the beautiful old houses and lovely gardens we called our homes. We had teachers too, poor like ourselves and just as proud, who taught us the classics, music, painting and all the accomplishments of high born ladies. For you must know that in spite of poverty, your mother was the daughter of an ancient and princely house. Perhaps you have not heard that even our Emperor used to be poor, so poor he had not money to repair the leaking roofs of his many palaces.

"That was because, away up in Yedo, three hundred miles from here, lived a man of whom your foster uncle must often have spoken to you, called the Barbarian Quelling Commander of the Armies of the Son of Heaven, but who was really the ruler of Japan. For over two hundred years his ancestors had wielded

this power from their moated castles. All up and down our country their vassals governed our provinces and gathered our revenues. Horsemen, bowmen, standard bearers, smiths and armorers ate up these revenues. Every year, along the great highways that ran from the Bridge of Japan in Yedo to the furthermost promontories of our realm, processions of these warrior nobles streamed Yedoward, to pay homage to their chief. With outriders, packhorses, palanquins from which looked the lovely faces of rich robed ladies, and costly presents, I have often seen them jostling through these very streets. Yet only the smallest tithe of revenue or homage came to the Emperor they all professed to honor, but in reality shut up in this crumbling City of Peace.

"Then as you know the black ships of Commodore Perry came thundering to our shores. For all their warlike boasts, the armies of the Barbarian Queller could not have driven these foreigners we hated so away. Two hundred years the outside world had made progress in

arts and sciences, particularly in the sciences of commerce and of war. Two hundred years on the contrary, our nation had slept an enchanted sleep. Except for the Dutch who sent to our shores perhaps a half dozen trading ships a year, we had had no communication with any other people.

"The foreigners asked the Barbarian Queller to be admitted to our country to trade with us, and he could not refuse. But we, in the ancient palaces, seeing and knowing less than any in the Empire the true course of history, failed to see why he should allow this. Further, it was the right of the Emperor and not of the Barbarian Queller to decide a question so important to all the realm. So many of the warrior nobles who hated the foreigners and the Barbarian Quelling General as much as we did, also thought. And so came about the civil war that placed the rightful Emperor in power in the castle of Yedo, and left our capital of a thousand years deserted as you see."

The Lady's glance came back from the vine-

wreathed windows overlooking the once crowded Imperial enclosure, from which the fires of that same civil war had swept its many mansions, and from the already shuttered Palace of the Empress Dowager, glooming in its grove of camphor trees.

"I have not forgotten your mother," she resumed in answer to Treasure Flower's wistful bewilderment. "This is your mother's story and mine. Your father's father, it seems, was highest in the favor of the Commander in Chief at Yedo; so high that it was thought a marriage arranged between his son and your mother might bring the court and the military parties closer together, and avert a war. With what ceremony the bridegroom came riding down from Yedo, and with what hopes we, unknowing, waved our good-bys to the girl bride he proudly bore away! They were only children, both of them, and in spite of our long feud, our hearts could not help going out to your noble father, so handsome and manly a figure in his military surcoat, half hid-

ing the swords thrust in knightly fashion through his sash."

The Lady paused. "I never saw your mother again, nor heard from her even. The war clouds that seemed to lift for a few years after her marriage suddenly closed about us. When peace came, no trace of your mother or your father could be found.

"But that is not the end, dear child." She placed her hand reassuringly over the thin hands on the counterpane. "Listen, Treasure Flower, your father lives! From those far countries to which he fled after the death of his Lord, he is coming home to you."

CHAPTER XIV

THE ART OF BEING A PRINCESS

FOR a long time after the mysterious Lady in her grey dress melted like a shadow from the darkening room, Treasure Flower lay in a waking dream. In her hand she held a slender letter the Lady had read her from her father in far away England, in her heart she cherished the first words she had ever known of his love. It seemed to her that now at last she understood the heart-aching prayers she used to make so many lonely mornings to the tablet inscribed to her mother's memory in the Temple of Benten. All the wealth of her unconscious adoration poured suddenly in a flood tide toward her living parent, the hero-father of whom her visitor told her. From being held a traitor with a price upon his head, she knew he had won his way back to honor.

More than that the lady would not tell. "Wait, child, till he comes," she had said.

Wait? How could she wait? Only the thought that she had much to do to make herself worthy of so noble a father, gave her patience. As the Lady had told her, she must make haste to grow well and strong and she must study too, so that her father might find her like her dear mother in accomplishments as well as in features, when he came home again.

Gradually she came back to the present. What was the meaning of the steady hum-hum of conversation below in the doctor's study, she wondered? And where was everybody? Where in particular was Lynette? She gave a pull to the bell-cord hanging beside the bed. Almost immediately Lynette came in, but such an anxious, pathetic Lynette.

At sight of her, Treasure Flower's conscience was troubled. She knew how worried Lynette had been ever since the Empress Dowager's eyes fell in anger upon them. "Dear Lynette," she cried, holding out her

arms, "I ought to have missed you sooner. Please come right here and I will tell you everything."

With what interest and relief Lynette listened to her story, you can imagine. "And now," Treasure Flower concluded, "I have a father like you. Are you not glad with me, Lynette?"

How glad, how wonderfully glad, Lynette had no words to tell her. "Do you suppose it is a secret," she asked presently. "There have been so many secrets—"

"Too many, Lynette, have there not?" Her father's voice rang cheerily from the doorway. He was followed by her mother, and behind them came Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount, making, as Treasure Flower looked at them, the strangest curtseys. Behind them, curtseying also, Pomegranate bore in the supper tray.

"But we are not going to have any more secrets from any one any longer," chimed in Lynette's mother, "and only one more surprise.

Dear Treasure Flower, the Lady who has just gone, asked me to give you a new name, the name your mother bore and gave you before she died. She called you Plum Blossom."

From that day our little village maid, who used to play with the foxes and the goldfish and the butterflies, our Treasure Flower, ceased to be. In her place was a little girl who looked like her, thought like her (and in spite of her new father and her new dreams felt oh, so homesick sometimes for Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount and the old temple up among the hills), but she was known as Princess Plum. A very unpretending, humble Princess, to be sure, with no one but Pomegranate to wait on her, and not even any new dresses as yet. Still, one could feel the difference. Only Lynette ignored it. To her, her dear playmate was always Treasure Flower.

It seems it had been decided in those conferences in the doctor's study, of which Plum Blossom had heard the echoes, that the very best place for this princess to be educated un-

der the circumstances was in the home of Lynette's parents. There the doctor, whose fame had already traveled from the old to the new Capital, could have her in his skillful care. And there his wife could teach her the American ways and the foreign language her father was eager to have her learn. There too (yes, in those grave conversations they had thought this very much to the Princess Plum's advantage) she could have as her companion and playmate American Lynette.

You may be sure Lynette was overjoyed at this happy ending of her anxieties. As she confided to her father, she had been so certain that in some way the Empress-Dowager was going to harm her Treasure, or at least take her away. Then she learned that Father all the time knew her dreadful secret, and Aunt Lavender knew it and Uncle Cedarmount and Pomegranate. In short, Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount had sent Treasure Flower to the city emblazoned with the dishonored crest of the Hojo, hoping that in some way she wou-

attract just the attention she did from the royal party. For they had heard as much as six months before of her father's return to royal favor,—but of that I shall tell you later. Day by day after the receipt of his letter the old couple had waited for an imperial courier to bring official word of him from the Eastern Capital and to claim his little daughter. But no word came. Worse, on a day, as Uncle Cedarmount skirted the castle moat, he had seen workmen pulling down the massive bastions for the roadbed of the new railroad which the Emperor was to open in the spring. It was then that he thought of the golden butterflies of his House. They might yet win one more victory and save the Castle of the Barrier to its absent lord.

Now, have I not almost told you another secret after all,—and one that even Princess Plum Blossom herself did not know?

Those long spring days when Lynette went each morning to school, were now equally busy for Plum Blossom at home. Aunt Lavender

and Uncle Cedarmount had not neglected her education; on the contrary, Uncle Cedarmount took pains to teach her to read Chinese as well as Japanese, a remarkable accomplishment for a girl. She could write too, very beautifully in both languages, and this was the highest distinction of a scholar. Drawing also he taught her, and being a nature lover as well as an artist, he had guided her so that her brush traced with a single sweep the fragile curves of a rose, the darting wings of a swallow, or the tiny mouse that nibbled the offerings on the altar of the Goddess Benten. Music was Aunt Lavender's province, and bustling Aunt Lavender found time to train the child's fingers patiently to the long harp strings. With Aunt Lavender she read also and committed to memory that book of deportment every Japanese girl must know. "It is better for women to have a good mind than a beautiful appearance." "She shall always keep to her duty, and must not neglect her weaving, sewing and spinning." "The rule which women must observe is obedience."

These rules Treasure Flower knew by heart.

It was in the ornamental usages of polite society that she was deficient, for the simple reason that at the lonely and ruined Temple, of society there was none. Teachers were to be found for her in the gentle arts of flower arrangement, of tea serving and of poetry making. Strange to say, it was from the mansion of the Flowery Nobles next door that its once haughty mistress came at the request of Treasure Flower's new friends to teach the flower craft. A trying ordeal for her must have been her first lesson at the house of the despised barbarians. Yet she seemed as daintily unconcerned as the sheaf of irises, blue and amethyst and white, that she brought with her; the earliest of the July irises in her garden to blossom, she said. Like silken banners they lay on the tray that Pomegranate carried in with much ceremony and laid before her on the floor. A shallow, pale green dish stood on a lacquer stand beside her. Another tray held her tools, —scissors, pliers, knives and spatulas for the

handling of the flowers. A water urn and a little tub of water completed her array. Plum Blossom watched with fascination the graceful hands in the drooping lavender sleeves, as they curled a petal here or trimmed a leaf there to obtain the best effect in accordance with the rules of the ancient art. These rules, meantime, the flower mistress explained. To the root of each green stalk, she then fitted a bamboo shoe, and stood the blossoms upright in the bowl. Over these supports she strewed lightly smooth, white pebbles; poured in water from the urn; and to carry out the picture, let loose in the iris-fringed lakelet a half dozen tiny gold and silver fish, so tiny that they were no bigger than tadpoles. A few last touches, but infinitely careful touches, and the composition was done, perfect even to the drops of dew on the flowers' golden throats.

And then, quite contrary to custom, which places these lovely flower arrangements in the frame of a polished alcove, this one was lifted, stand and all, to Plum Blossom's counterpane.

This was the first of many delightful mornings to Plum Blossom, when she learned not only the arrangement but the language of flowers; the morning glory pure in heart, the pine, evergreen symbol of life, and her own plum blossom, emblem of courage and of spring.

> Brave Plum,
> Whiter than snow
> The wintry breezes blow
> Thy fragrance to my door.
> Now know I spring is come!

quoted the Flower Mistress softly.

You can see that the art of poetry was not very far removed from the art of flowers. But the tea serving, besides poetry and flowers, must needs have a special room in a garden for its proper observance. And that of course could not be brought even to a Princess. So Plum Blossom had to wait until she was stronger and passed at last behind the golden screen of the Flowery Noble's vestibule to the garden, now glorious with chrysanthemums, where the tea pavilion was built.

But all the wonderful ceremony of the tea I could not tell you of, if I tried. Besides, I think you, like Lynette who went with her, would have been more interested in the other little guests, the children of the Flowery Nobles, sitting so very correctly on the honey-colored mats, and sipping their strong, green tea.

"To think," said Lynette as they entered their own gate once more, "that we have really been to tea with the Flowery children. But then, I forget," she added with a smile twisted between laughing and crying, "that you are a Flowery Noble yourself."

CHAPTER XV

THE FAR HOKKAIDO

BUT here I have been telling you of the autumn, and leaving out altogether that long-to-be-remembered summer when Plum Blossom and Lynette went together to the island of Hokkaido, known to the Japanese as "The Northern Road." Sick as she was, little Plum Blossom could not remain in the hot and rainy city among the rice swamps. So the doctor, who had heard of the bracing climate of Japan's most northern island, decided to take his patient and his family there. Pomegranate and Cherryfield were busy indeed in the month that preceded their departure; Pomegranate with sewing, and Cherryfield with training the new gardener to appreciate the currant bushes, peas, corn and squashes (all unknown to Japanese gardens) he was leaving

in his care. Besides, they were busy too in quite another fashion. Ever since the day Cherryfield saved Treasure Flower from the river at the risk of his own life (though as to that he always denied it) he seemed to have gained some favor with Pomegranate. So when Aunt Lavender, who was a real matchmaker, saw with her shrewd black eyes what Cherryfield did not see, she found a way to arrange matters to the entire satisfaction of both. In short, Pomegranate and Cherryfield were to be married. Uncle Cedarmount and Aunt Lavender returned to the city for the ceremony, and, joy of joys to Plum Blossom, she was carried down in her Uncle's arms to the servants' quarters to see it.

A prettier bride, in her dress and veil of white silk, the only spots of color her red lips and the flushed cheeks which she refused to powder as most brides do, in all the Five Provinces [33] could not have been found. At least, so said Uncle Cedarmount, who surely ought to know. As for Cherryfield, he had resumed

for the day his knight's costume of loose divided trousers and flaring shoulder capes. Yes, and even his two cherished swords, though that indeed was contrary to the Emperor's new decree. Certainly he looked every bit the true knight that he was. For wedding decorations there was set before the couple a spray of pine and a spray of plum in a bronze vase inlaid with silver storks. They had been arranged by Plum Blossom herself under the direction of the Flower Mistress. In their flower language they said, "You are beautiful like the plum" to Pomegranate, "You are strong like the pine," to Cherryfield, and to both, "May your life be as long as the stork's." The service was very brief. A sipping of rice wine from the same bowl by bride and groom to signify the sharing of joy and sorrow, a feast to which came many friends, and the wedding was complete.

The next day a happy party, escorted to the station by the entire American colony, not to mention a host of students and Japanese

friends, took the train for the port of Kobe, and from there a steamer for the north. A thousands miles by sea was a novel experience for Plum Blossom, whose longest voyage had been across the Lake to Sakamoto. Day long she lay in her steamer chair on deck, listening to the measured throb of the engines, or the swish-swish-swash of the prow. As for Lynette, she made the speedy acquaintance of the only other speakers of English on board, the parrot in the fo'castle and the Captain on the bridge. In fact the latter took a great interest in his two small passengers. One morning he sent a cabin boy on purpose to wake them in time to see that most glorious extinct volcano which you know as Fujiyama, but which Plum Blossom might have told you was the Goddess-Radiant-Blooming-as-the-Flowers-of-the-Trees. If you had seen as she and Lynette did, its snowy summit, flushed with dawn, floating above the still grey sea, you too might have thought of it as a Radiant Blooming Goddess. Lynette did; a rose lotus, she called it, "like the

lotus buds in the Castle moat opening to the sun."

Another day they looked through the Captain's glasses at the white sea horses that, racing shoreward, threw themselves in flying foam on sandy beach or pine-crowned headland. Once there was great excitement over two spouting whales. And daily as they skirted the beautiful coast, Pomegranate or Cherryfield told them brave stories of the Lords of those far seen provinces; now Lords no longer, because to end the civil war they gave up provinces, titles and revenues to the rightful Emperor. So they heard of the Lord of Mito, the last of the Barbarian Quelling Generals, and again of the Lord of Mutsu who sheltered Yoshitsune a thousand years ago.

So at last the good ship brought them to Hakodate, a new and thriving city built in the shelter of a massive headland about a curving shore. Across the harbor another volcano towered, not regular like Fuji, but jagged and cold and grey, even to its grey smoke plume.

Only a few miles from the base of this mountain on an inlet of Volcano Bay, they found their summer home. A Buddhist temple[34] it was, built many years before by the lord of this remote province, in the hope of converting the Ainu of the island to his faith.

These Ainu are a very different people from the Japanese. Like our Indians, they fish and hunt and do not till the ground. Some say they are the descendants of the same hill tribes against whom the Emperor's generals waged war so many centuries. A village of them was situated on the beach west of the Temple, around a wooded spur. But the first glimpse of them Lynette and Plum Blossom had was on the afternoon of their arrival, when one of their huge canoes, hollowed out of the trunks of two trees and lashed together, met the little steamer that plied across the bay, and took them on board to row them to their unfrequented haven. The first feeling Plum Blossom had was one of fear, so hairy and so wild were these creatures; the next, as they lifted

her on board, was of the kindness of their gentle hands and gentler voices. In all the long row shoreward, no sound broke the stillness, except the dipping of the paddles and the lapping of the waves. Just at sunset the boat shot into the mouth of a tiny harbor, and a few minutes later was run on the shelving sand. Overhead the sky made a background like golden lacquer for dark rising shores of oak and beech and cedar; in the golden water lay reflected the red gables of the lonely Temple; towering above all, the bleak pinnacles of the Volcano were touched with rose.

But I doubt if even the scenery, so strangely silent yet so enchanting, could have satisfied our travelers long. Tired and hungry, they appreciated just as much the welcome of the old priest, and the warmth of the charcoal braziers and the fresh broiled salmon brought in as soon as they were seated, by his young acolyte. That night Plum Blossom and Lynette fell asleep to the lullaby of the water and the song of the temple bell.

What shall I choose to tell you of the events of that wilderness summer? Will you scramble with Lynette and her father and the priest up the steep trail and down to the beach where the Ainu houses cluster? How clean is the winding street and how trim the houses thatched in flounces from the roof tree to the ground! See, the old man in the doorway yonder is saluting you, waving his hands and stroking his long, white beard. He is the chief of this village and invites you to enter his house. Inside, seated on mats about the fire, are his wife, his son's wife and her children, pretty little things with masses of black hair, dark, wistful eyes, and brown skin very plain to be seen. For in the Ainu families, the children wear no clothes. The older members do, however, and the old woman by the fire is busy weaving the coarse bark cloth from which they are made, while her daughter-in-law sews a border of indigo cotton on a tunic for her husband. The chief and his son hasten to bring forward from the wall a raised platform.

On it they throw a great bear skin and invite you to be seated. Then they brew strong tea, and serve it, not indeed in the manner the Flowery Nobles would have done, but in cups that might well have been a noble's envy. They are of vermilion Kaga [35] ware. After tea the old man brings from a shelf in a dark corner yet other treasures; inlaid armor, fine lacquer and more porcelain. These, he tells the priest, were given his father's fathers by a great Prince. Indeed, many Princes have been kind to his people, but the kindest was Yoshitsune, years and years ago.

At the mention of that name, Lynette's eyes, which had been growing bigger and bigger, became certainly as round as the teacups. "Does he mean our Yoshitsune?" she asked astonished.

"None other," the priest answered. "I cannot convert these heathen to Buddha. But centuries ago Yoshitsune seems to have had better success. Him they worship as a god."

"He was kind to us," the quiet voiced chief

repeated. "He lived among us and taught us. His teachings we have forgotten, but him we never forget."

Lynette, delighted, recounted this visit to Plum Blossom that night. When she came to Yoshitsune,—

"Oh, I am so glad," cried Plum Blossom. "Pomegranate, I always knew he escaped from the base Lord of Mutsu. And to think he lived to be a god!"

Pomegranate paused in rubbing the back of her very much excited Princess. "Some day," she said, smiling wisely, "I will tell you another story of Yoshitsune under the name of Ghengis Khan." [36]

But walking was the least of Lynette's diversions. Her father, you remember, was a collector of many things. In this untamed country he was in his element. Not only were butterflies and dragonflies by the hundreds to be caught and mounted, there were the flowers and the birds of the unknown north to be studied. Ponies, half wild, but sure of foot,

could be had for a song. Every one had a pony; even Pomegranate learned to ride. Lynette's was a strong, shaggy blackamore, named Dart. On it she followed her father wherever he would let her go, far up the burned and blackened scaurs of the volcano: along the beach, racing with the white sea horses; or up some tangled ravine, so still it seemed as if the silence must break. A moment's waiting, and often it was broken by the flutes of nightingales.

There were bear tracks on the hunting trails through these forests where Lynette and her father rode, and sometimes Bruin himself was to be met with on the edge of a grassy pasture, eating berries. Then followed a race (in opposite directions) between Master Bruin and Master Dart. It was only by good luck that Lynette managed to stay on during these madcap rides.

As for Plum Blossom, though every day saw her gaining in strength, she could not go on any of these land excursions. But there were

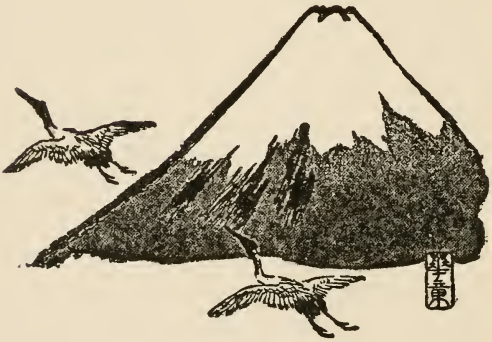
other things she could do and did do. For her the Ainu chief had a new dugout made, and assigned it to two trusty men to be always at her service. On calm days she ventured far out on the blue waters of the bay; when the wind there was too strong, the boat was turned up river, and she glided close into the heart of the ancient forest, where pond lilies lay double on the quiet margins and fringed a lovelier forest in the clear depths below. Often Lynette's mother and Lynette herself and even the doctor too went boating with her. Then, what fun to race the slender boats through the rushing water, or, beaching in some woody cove, to broil over the coals the fish caught on the trolling lines. The Ainu village too she could reach by boat, and many a morning she spent watching the making of the huge fishing nets with which later in the season the fishermen would catch thousands upon thousands of silvery salmon for winter use. These, they told her, were dried and stored along with a little

millet and venison and bear's meat in the high storehouses standing outside each hut.

Or, did it rain, the old temple whose ritual and faith differed entirely from the simple worship in Uncle Cedarmount's shrine, was a source of endless interest. The carved and gilded altar, the censers, the candles and the musty dimness had for her a potent charm. And when at dawn and vespers the sweet-toned bell called for the worshipers who did not come, Plum Blossom often stole up the flight of stone steps to stand in the doorway and watch the priests in their faded vestments light the altar candles and chant their litanies.

In those days Plum Blossom learned too of another God of whom Lynette's mother told her. Lynette and she used often to talk of him in the darkness after they were tucked side by side into their quilts. Strange and beautiful fancy, Plum Blossom added him to the heaven of her many deities. To her indeed the world was peopled with gods and goddesses. The

rose and the dawn she worshiped alike for the joy they gave her. Because the strangers' God was beautiful, she also worshiped him.



CHAPTER XVI

SUKENAO THE SWORDSMITH

BUT the priest of the Temple of the Way of Buddha knew other stories than those of the Buddhist saints of which he liked best to tell his little listeners. And his temple was certainly fuller of treasures than any Ainu hut. One stormy afternoon, when the roar of the wind-tossed forest drowned even the beating of the surf, he sat by the brazier in his study showing his foreign guests a certain beautiful sword. Hilt and trappings were gone, but the long blade, so cold that it looked like frosted silver, was a wonder in his hands. With it he cut in two a scarf of gossamer crêpe, he bent it like a taut bow, he brought it down on a string of copper coins and cleft them every one.

In the strange setting of the storm and the dimly lighted room, you can imagine this was

a weird exhibition. Even Plum Blossom, to whom swords were far more familiar than to Lynette, shuddered at the swiftly flashing strokes.

The courtly priest, who had not meant at all to frighten the children, made haste to wipe his weapon, wrap it in silk sheathings, and replace it in the box from which he had taken it, beside him.

"That," he said simply as he fastened the lid, "is a very famous sword which came into my possession quite recently. But of that you shall hear later. Its earlier history is known to every knight in Japan."

"Doubtless you," he turned to the doctor, "have heard of the matchless blades of Masamune, the Prince of swordsmiths. His were the days when in truth the sword was the soul of the *samurai,* and its maker their priest. Yet the distinction of the sword I have here, perfect as any the Master forged, is that it was not made by Masamune, but by a pupil of his.

"It happened in this way. The Baron of

one of the castles in the Province of Harima, saw with sorrow that the taxes imposed by his overlord were taking from the farmers the very rice out of their mouths. For two years the summer rains necessary for the growth of their crops had not fallen. Yet the taxes were not diminished. The farmers had not even millet seed to plant; they went and dug the wild roots of the mountains for food. Now the Lord of the castle determined that he at least would no longer be guilty of the ruin of so many hard-working, innocent people. He sold his horses, exchanged his brocaded silks for cotton, parted even with his sword (than which a *samurai* would ordinarily die) and distributed the money among his lord's dependents. The devotion of these poor people to him in consequence was something pathetic to see; they looked on him as a god. He was equally popular among his own men-at-arms as well; every one of them would have been proud to die for him.

"But among the other gentry of the Province,

who were no whit abating their extravagance, but still rode insolently through the starving villages, he was an object of scornful hatred. All the more so as his popularity with the peasantry increased.

"On the fifteenth of September in those days, there was celebrated the Feast of the Full Moon. In lantern-lighted pavilions on the shore of the Inland Sea, the knights of the Province gathered and whiled away the night with feasting, wine and song. To this feast came the nearest neighbor of the kind-hearted Baron, and to it came the Baron himself.

"The neighboring knight, observing the Baron's poor dress and accouterments, which made him unpleasantly conspicuous in the well-dressed throng, felt all the malice of an evil doer against a just and righteous man. Raising his voice, 'My Lord,' said he with a courtly sneer, 'you who have the good of the country so much at heart, are of course a master judge of the country's defense, the sword of the samurai.'

"At the first word of his address, the other guests became silent, the dancing girls hushed their music, and the wine cups were untouched.

"'I have just purchased a weapon,' the speaker continued, 'on which I should like to have such an expert opinion as yours.'

"'Sir Knight, you have evidently been misinformed, for of such matters I am no judge,' protested the Baron.

"But the knight insisted on taking his richly ornamented sword from the rack and placing it in the Baron's hands.

"Slowly the Baron drew the exquisite blade, which quivered in the moonlight even as the sea below. 'It is indeed a most excellent blade,' he said in his unruffled voice, 'if I mistake not, the work of Masamune.'

"'You say well,' the Knight replied. 'And now that you have examined my sword, I have the right to examine yours.' He lifted the Baron's tawdry weapon and looked with well-feigned surprise at its leaden-colored edge.

"'What,' cried he, 'my eyes must deceive me.

No patriot would carry so mean a blade. With your permission, I will try it.' And at that, he swung it with both hands against the wooden railing of the balcony. The edge that should have cleft it like a bamboo shoot, crumbled at the blow.

"Then indeed the Knight drove home his insult, calling on all the company to witness the traitor in their midst. 'For,' said he, 'how can he, defenseless of his own honor, defend that of his liege lord?'

"In truth, the Baron made no pretense to defend his honor, though he knew and every one there knew, that he had sold his sword for what he considered his Lord's highest service, the saving of his starving people.

"But when all the banqueters one by one had silently departed, his page slipped into the room and threw himself at his master's feet. 'Honorable Master, give me permission to follow this insolent knight.'

" 'To what purpose, boy,' the Baron replied. 'Had I wished, would I not myself have called

him to account? But in so doing, would not one of us have been killed? Yet his life as well as mine is of value to our lord.'

"The boy, ashamed before the unselfish loyalty of his master, said no more. Yet day by day he brooded over the insult to so noble a man and the disgrace of his broken sword. 'Oh,' thought he, 'that I had a thousand *ryo* [37] to buy a sword for my master! But alas, in ten years' time, I could never earn so much.'

"One night he formed a resolution; he would go to Osaka and take service there. Surely in that bustling city of merchants and traders, some one would want a bright and willing lad. Perhaps thus in three years time he might be able to bring home the coveted sword.

" 'Master,' he said in the morning, 'let me have your permission to go on a pilgrimage.'

"The Master concealed his astonishment. 'For how long?' he asked.

" 'For three years.'

"The Master considered; the lad had been a good lad; he would not presume to ask his

reasons. 'Go then,' he said, 'and the gods go with you.' Drawing out his money pouch,—a very slender pouch—he presented him with one *ryo*.

"At this generosity, which the page knew his master could so ill afford, his resolution almost broke. Yet it would never do to confide his secret. With tears in his eyes he took the money and set forth.

"Now Osaka was several days' journey from his Province, and one *ryo* in the girdle of a country lad does not last long. More than half the way the page was obliged to travel on foot. Many a night he slept under a tree or in the shelter of the rice stacks in the harvest fields.

"When at last he did reach the city, what a bewildering place he found it; a network of streets passing on low-arched bridges across a succession of canals, streets, bridges and waterways equally crowded with trade. Now, he passed down a street lined with shops of porcelain and earthenware; further on, along the water front, provision merchants gathered;

and yonder, fishing junks were unloading their morning's catch on the quay. So, all eyes and ears, our country boy wandered until he came to a temple enclosure. He went in. Here in the gloom of the altar beneath the massive roof, the sounds of the city were still.

"The boy knelt. 'Holy Buddha, teach me how to make the money,' was his prayer. For a long time he waited, half-hoping for an answer, yet fearing that so great a god might not hear so foolish a request.

"Suddenly 'Cling, clang, cling, clang—' He started. Surely those were the hammers of a sword maker.

"Following the sound, he came to a close shut gate. Above it was an inscription, 'Masamune the Sword Maker,' he read.

"Masamune, the Prince of Swordmakers!

"All day the page hung about the gate, peering in through a crack to see apprentices making the swords for which he would have given his life, or listening to the cling clang, cling clang of the hammers.

" 'Ah, now I have it; the first goes this way, the second that.'

"The little street urchins who had gathered to watch this strange countryman, became alarmed at his antics. 'He is crazy,' they said, and ran away.

"But the page did not even see them. When the day's work was over and the last pupil of the Master had left the courtyard, 'Now is my chance,' said he.

"In his excitement, he not only spoke aloud, he shouted.

"Masamune himself came to drive the beggarly looking country lout from his gate. 'Here you, if you want anything to eat, go round to the kitchen.'

" 'Honorable Sir, I want nothing but to become your pupil.'

" 'My pupil, indeed! Some of the apprentices you saw have worked for me for five years, and make no better swords now than they did when they came. You are foolish.'

" 'Honorably unsympathetic Sir, if you do

not take me I shall die.' And die he would have then and there had not Masamune prevented him.

" 'Kindly do not put me to the trouble of disposing of your body,' he protested. Then seeing how earnest the boy was, he began to consider his request. 'Have you any one who can recommend you?'

" 'Certainly, my master at home.'

" 'Home,' scoffed Masamune. 'Don't you know any one in Osaka?'

" 'Oh, yes, I do know some one, the kind man in the temple yonder.'

" 'What, you know the priest?'

" 'Oh, no; not the priest, but the man who sits on the altar and listens to those who pray.'

" 'You mean the Buddha?' That was a joke indeed.

"Yet, in the end, Masamune the Sword Maker did take that ridiculous page to be a pupil. And for a guarantee he showed him the dagger that never left his belt.

"The page understood perfectly; he knew too

that his struggle had only just begun. He had no opportunity to work with the other apprentices, finely clothed and properly recommended. His task was to brush out his Master's rooms. But his spare time was not spent in idleness; daily he watched the Master at the forge, and at night, when all the house was asleep, stole to the smithy to try his own stroke on the steel.

"On New Year's Eve, the pupils came together to present to the Sword Master the swords they had made. The latter opened the box placed before him and took out the blades one by one. None pleased him. At the bottom of the pile he came on a scrap of steel.

" 'Who has done this?' he cried. For the first time praise and astonishment were in his tones.

"But the pupils all were silent. Only the page knew who had placed that bit of metal there.

"Not many months after, the Emperor himself commanded Masamune to make for him a sword.

"Masamune was overwhelmed. 'Though I have so many pupils, not one of them can be my second stroke. How then can I make the sword?'

"Now, our page stepped forward. 'I will be your second stroke,' he said.

" 'You!' Nevertheless, there was no harm in putting the braggart to the test.

"Masamune thrust an unfinished steel into the forge, drew it out and placed it red hot on the anvil.

" 'Cling,' rang his hammer.

" 'Clang,' answered the hammer of the page.

"Swifter fell the strokes of the Master; just as surely as the first, followed the strokes of the page.

"The blade was done, and perfectly done. Masamune plunged it into the hissing water that was to temper it for its grim work. Then, dagger in hand, he turned to his pupil. 'Spy,' said he, 'though you have dared to come to my forge and learn my secrets, you shall not carry them away.'

"The page fell at his feet, but not from fear. Unbounded joy filled his heart. He confessed all, the insult to his master, his own vow, and now at last in the words of Masamune, the hope that his vow might be fulfilled.

"Unaccustomed tears stood in the eyes of the Sword Master as he finished. 'Now Buddha bless you for a noble lad! I will help you all I can.'

"Thereafter the Master delighted to do him honor. Even the Emperor was told of his skill and bestowed a title on him.

"At last, the three years of his apprenticeship were drawing to a close, and the young swordsmith set to work on the sword that was to be his masterpiece. Night and day he toiled; often at midnight Masamune woke to hear him hammering still. One night he detected a second hammer. He listened. What glorious strokes they were! Softly he stole to the smithy. Through the door poured a blinding radiance; it centered in the second smith who stood beside the forge.

"'The Lord Buddha himself assists him,' whispered Masamune. And he turned from the place as from a holy shrine.

"Thus was wrought the sword the poor page had vowed to give his master. Two more months of toil saw it completed, inlaid guard, gold encrusted hilt and lacquered scabbard; the noblest sword, some say, that ever left the forge.

"It remained only for our former page to make the journey back to his province and present it to his lord. His amazement I leave you to imagine. Yet the wonderful sword, he well knew, was outmatched by the wonderful heart of the boy, tempered to perfect knighthood and truer than steel."

The priest paused to lay back once more the folds from the shining blade.

"It may be that Sukenao the Swordsmith might have made more flawless blades. But this was both his best and his last. The master whom he so loved was shortly after put himself to the supreme test of loyalty. With this very

sword, he laid down his life for his Prince. But Sukenao became a priest and prayed for his master's soul."

CHAPTER XVII

PLUM BLOSSOM'S HERITAGE

CHRISTMAS EVE in a foreign land, and especially in a land that has no Christmas; how lonely it is! So ran Mrs. Bowne's thoughts as she and Lynette, speeding homeward from the lower city, skirted the palace walls. The early winter twilight, pierced at intervals by dim street lamps, the ghostly solitude of the high walled enclosure and of the empty park, oppressed her still further. And the delay of the ship from America which should have brought Christmas presents for the children and reminders from the friends there, made her realize how cut off from their real home they were. Even Lynette's usual gayety, at its bubbling height that afternoon in the Awata potteries, where she selected her belated presents, was suddenly chilled. This

year there would be no tree in the stucco schoolhouse, to which the American children would come. All were scattered, two in the far away Hokkaido from which the Bownes had returned in October, two in that farther away America, to which sooner or later, every foreign child went for his schooling,—went and never returned.

That brought Lynette face to face with her immediate sorrow; Treasure Flower was going too. For eight months the two girls had been together; all the autumn, in lessons and in play they had been inseparable. But now it wanted only a letter from that mysterious father, and her Treasure, dear to her as the sister she had always longed for, would be snatched away. At New Year's he had said he would send for her.

"Oh, I hate him," cried Lynette. "I do, I do!"

"My dear Lynette, hate whom?" inquired her startled mother.

"Treasure Flower's father." And the lump

in her throat that had been growing bigger and bigger, burst in a flood of tears.

That night when at last the house was quiet, except in the cozy sitting room where the doctor and his wife were filling Christmas stockings, Lynette's mother spoke of the child's outburst.

"Perhaps we did wrong in allowing her to become so fond of Treasure Flower," she concluded.

"Well, dear," said the doctor soothingly, "as I remember, the mischief was done before you or I had much to say about it. Had we known who Treasure Flower was, to begin with, we might have acted differently. But at the time she seemed a providential little sister for our lonely little girl."

"I know, and we planned to make the two so happy by sending them to school together."

"Dear wife," the doctor rejoined, "have you not thought that perhaps we might do so yet?"

Mrs. Bowne caught her breath. "But she, a princess?"

"Yes, a princess, but very much like the other princesses the Imperial Government is beginning to send to America for their education."

His wife pondered. "It all depends on her father."

"You do yourself an injustice there." He looked with unbounded approval at the gracious lady who was the mistress of his home. "Has he not asked us to bring Plum Blossom to him? I think it will depend on you!"

Christmas morning, the sparrows in the eaves were no earlier risers nor merrier chatterers than Plum Blossom and Lynette. That the Christmas ship was overdue no longer mattered. Gay tea-sets, dolls dressed by Pomegranate's deft fingers, a family of storks (baby storks and all) carved from cuttle-fish bone and set in a miniature ricefield, just as Plum Blossom had seen them a hundred times in the fields about her home, inch square bags of colored silk and crêpe with which to play jackstones, battledores and shuttlecocks, in short gifts

from all to all, made the stockings overflow. One girl I know, was even glad to go without her American dolls. For would not the ship that brought them bring her Treasure's father too?

Plum Blossom's own gifts, on this her very first Christmas, she had selected with infinite care. Many a conference had she and Pomegranate had over them, and many a trip to toy shops and antique shops and silk shops together. There were a white silk scarf damasked in cherry blossoms for Lynette, a sage green crêpe for Mrs. Bowne, and a lacquer chest for the doctor "for your butterflies," said she. These you may be sure, were complete surprises. Yet, after all, it was she herself who had the greatest surprise in the end.

At the very bottom of her pile of presents was a longish, slender box. It was wrapped as all Japanese presents of value are, and as Plum Blossom's own had been, in a square of brocaded silk. But this silk was old and faded, so old that only by looking closely could one detect

the pattern. Looking thus closely as she unwrapped it, Plum Blossom saw the tarnished, outstretched wings of the Hojo butterfly crest. Inside the box was another silk cover which she had seen before, and inside that, like a queen's jewel, glittered the Sukenao blade.

But Plum Blossom shivered as her fingers touched the cold steel. Her eyes sought those of the doctor, who regarded her intently. "Why is this given to me?"

"Because it belongs to you. Because it belonged to your father, and his father, and his father's father before him. Little Plum Blossom." He drew the trembling child closer to his knee. "It is time you knew who you are and who is the father you are so soon to see. We," he swept at a glance the room in which as if by magic had appeared Pomegranate and Cherryfield, Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount, and strangest of all, the Flowery Nobles and their children, "have known you for a long time. Only you and Lynette have been kept in ignorance." Lynette, half awed, slipped to her

father's other knee, and the shelter of his other arm. "Do you remember, Lynette, what you asked Plum Blossom the first morning you met her,—whether her mother was the lady of the Castle? She was,—and more, a Princess of the Blood. And her father, who is even now waiting for her in the Emperor's new capital, was the son of the Barbarian Quelling Commander's Regent, once the Lord of the Barrier."

Her father was waiting for her. So much Plum Blossom held to during the announcement and the impromptu reception that followed, a reception in which it seemed to her there were more tears than smiles. That her own cheeks were wet, and that she did not once let go of Lynette's hand, except to welcome Aunt Lavender, she did not know until Lynette told her many years later.

But at last the Christmas feast which followed the presents was over, the letter brought by special post from Plum Blossom's father was read, the guests departed and the two girls

were left alone. Then only did the full meaning of her father's summons burst on her.

"Lynette, Lynette," she cried, "who is this noble but terrible father whom I have never seen? Am I not after all just the poor orphan who looked on Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount as my nearest and dearest, and not the daughter of a stranger who takes you and all I love from me?"

"Hush, Treasure, you are frightened." And Lynette like a little mother kissed and held her close. "Remember you do love him. And as he loves you I think, I *think,* he will not take you from me."

Three days later, as soon as a Princess with so many chests (whose contents of dresses, underdresses, sashes and hair ornaments, Pomegranate and Mistress Lavender had supervised) and so large a cortège, could be ready, Plum Blossom set forth for the Eastern Capital. In her suite were Lynette, her father and mother, the priest and his wife, whom Plum Blossom persisted in regarding still as her dear

aunt and uncle, Pomegranate and Cherryfield. The train that bore her from the station no longer looked so frightful an object as it had seemed less than a year before. Tea plantations, trellised orchards of pears and plums, rice-fields now green with winter wheat, thatched farming hamlets, again flashed by the windows. Again the blue lake spread to the west at the feet of bluer peaks. There rose Mount Hiei and the farther ranges, here were the even more familiar slopes of the Barrier, and the white castle, her white castle, on the shore. In the swiftly moving train, Plum Blossom was following the road her mother must have taken when she too went, a bride, to the castle, and later to the palace at Yedo with her lord. But the train, in a day and a night, accomplished what in her mother's time had been a month's journey. Morning framed in place of the lake the white cone of Fuji rising from a green plain as from an emerald sea, noon, the white sailed junks of the Bay of Yedo; till at last the train threaded more

slowly the crowded suburbs of the city, puffed into the station and stopped.

Would her father meet her, Plum Blossom wondered. She looked anxiously along the platform. No, she saw no imposing figure of military bearing such as she imagined; instead, a footman in foreign livery took charge of the party and piloted them to waiting carriages. Across bridges, through streets of small shops, past rich temples, up hill and down, the horses paced. Before them a runner cleared the way; on either hand men, women and children stared as the carriages rolled by. The streets were fuller than usual, the holiday spirit of the season was in the air. It fluttered in flags and kites and blowing lanterns and waved in the green pines and bamboos set up before each house.

> At every door the pine trees stand,
> One guidepost more to the Spirit Land.
> As there's gladness,
> So there's sadness.[38]

thought Plum Blossom in the words of the

"THE WHITE-SAILED JUNKS OF THE BAY OF JEDO"

ancient poem. Gladness or sadness, which would the day bring to her?

At length they came to a section of green lanes and pretty gardens, and beyond on higher ground to the better built portion of the city, where the lords of many provinces had lived in former times. Most of their palaces were in ruins, but their gardens still remained, forming a green border for the central object of the landscape, the triple moated Castle of the Tokugawa, the Barbarian Quelling Generals. Far within its peaceful precincts now lived the Emperor.

Skirting the outer moat, from which a cloud of waterfowl rose at their approach, the Princess's cortège passed a sentry-guarded bridge and stopped close by before a great, red gate. Noiselessly the leaves of this gate folded back and the carriages entered. There, before Plum Blossom had time to be frightened, horses and carriages vanished and she stood alone with her father. Alone at least in feeling. Everything else faded before that worn

yet high bred face, those yearning eyes, those slender, nervous hands held out to her, waiting for her to come.

Come she did, slowly at first, speechlessly. Then forgetting etiquette, forgetting everything except the strange bursting of her heart, "Father!" she cried, and was gathered to his breast.

Hours after, she still sat close beside him in the plain office in which he had chosen to receive her; an office with an immense desk in it and bookcases, where a man might work his life away. There were no swords here nor guns. Instead, the shelves were littered with hastily piled books. No, there was nothing martial about this father of hers except his ancestry. Gentleness as well as courage molded the lines of his face.

Plum Blossom studied him thoughtfully, a growing content in her heart. "I wonder why I was so afraid of you, my father," she said presently. "I think it was partly on account of that terrible sword."

"What sword, Treasure (for to him as well as to Lynette this Princess bore the pet name with which every Japanese baby is loved by its parents). What do you mean?"

"The Sukenao Blade."

"So," he said after she had finished her explanation, "the Priest gave back the sword. Perhaps if I tell you another story of it, you will understand."

He looked at her in silence for a while. How like her mother she was! How could he bear to tell her of those dark days succeeding her mother's death, of which even yet he seldom dared to think?

"You will have heard from Cedarmount," he began, "of the death of your grandfather, which took place before the imperial gateway you passed this afternoon. Though I was only a boy at the time, I was already married to your mother. We lived here, in this very suite, for this was our palace. After my father's assassination, there was nothing left but flight. His estate was ruined and shortly confiscated

as that of a traitor to the realm. Yet I want you to understand clearly that he was not a traitor. Both General and Emperor he served loyally; his crime lay in admitting the hated foreigners to our country, a brave and farseeing act for which this very day I have heard him praised by the Emperor's own lips. Still, even I can hold no rancor against his slayers. They too were loyal in the service of the Sovereign and brought about the overthrow of the military system which had usurped his just authority.

"But as for me, there was a price set on my head. Had it not been for faithful followers, I should have perished. Your mother also refused to leave me. We wandered, it matters not whither. For ten years we lived in hiding. Then you were born and that same night she died.

"Just twelve years ago on New Year's Eve, I brought you, my baby, to the temple of which our family have so long been the patrons, and left you with Mistress Lavender. Besides

you, I had only two possessions in all the world, my swords. One of them was the Sukenao blade.

"Some of the Tokugawa clansmen by this time were settled in the far North. I determined to cast in my fortune with them. There were grants of land to be had there, or failing that, ships to take me to other countries where my name would be unknown.

"You little thought when you lived in the temple on Volcano Bay, that your father had been there before you. But for the brave-hearted priest of the Temple of Buddha, I should not now be alive. When it was death for him either to harbor me or to assist me in escaping, he arranged for my passage on a schooner bound for Boston. He himself sculled out the scow of vegetables in which I was concealed, and so put me on board. You will not wonder that for a parting gift, I gave him my sword.

"Those were dreadful days on the schooner, when I had to work before the mast. They

were more dreadful days in Boston when I became a kitchen boy. But in the meantime I had learned English. One day I had an opportunity to do my employer a great service. The upshot was that he sent me to school and later to college.

"Now, at last, the laws forbidding any one to leave the shores of Japan, which had been in force two hundred years, were revoked. The new Emperor took up his residence in the capital of the Tokugawa, and outdoing them in progressive policies, proposed to send a company of his most promising young nobles abroad. They were to study the ways of foreign nations and bring back whatever they found of value to Japan. They came first to America. There they stood in need of an interpreter, and there they heard of me. Under another name, I served them in America and in Europe. One day, by order of the Emperor, the head of the Commission offered me the post of Minister of Education to our country. Acting a lie, I could not take the office. Besides,

my heart was burning for news of you, for whom I still dared not ask. I confessed my name and then I wrote to Cedarmount."

Her father paused. "It seems," he continued a little huskily, "that the name made no difference to the Emperor in the end. He confirmed the choice of the Commissioner. So, Treasure Flower, your father has returned to the land of his ancestors and to their very house, to do, I hope, as loyally for our beloved country as ever they have done."

Plum Blossom looked at him with shining face. Was he not a hero like that other exile, Yoshitsune, this father who told her so quietly of his sufferings, his dangers and his honors? Nay, was he not a greater than Yoshitsune, because his were the victories of the soul?

CHAPTER XVIII

THE LORD OF THE BARRIER

IT had been a foolish fear indeed to think that a father so indulgent and withal so wise, would separate his daughter from those who had been her protectors in years of adversity, a fear over which Plum Blossom and Lynette smiled often afterward. Far from it, the Emperor who had honored Plum Blossom's father, called Lynette's also to his service at the capital. The site of the new hospital of which he became the head was not far from the offices of the Minister of Education. And at the request of the Minister, the two homes were built side by side. Uncle Cedarmount and Aunt Lavender, to be sure, could not be permanently transplanted. But they often came to visit, and Plum Blossom had the satisfaction of knowing that their temple home was

being made more comfortable for them, and that a younger priest was gradually taking the duties of worship from the old man's care.

Not many years later, yet enough to have added several inches to Princess Plum Blossom's height, and an equal number to Lynette's long skirts, the two girls sat talking in the villa of the Castle by the Lake. A very different place it was from the rambling tea house set in its half-wild garden, that Lynette remembered. Now the sanded path down which she looked to the blue vista of the water was strewn only with fresh wistaria petals which the wind had that moment blown from the long purple tassels hanging overhead. Even at them a gardener with his trim broom looked askance. Somewhere in the recesses of the wood toward the castle a cuckoo was singing. Everywhere were the visible signs of order and of peace.

"To think that I have not been here in all these years," Plum Blossom was saying. "The last time I passed the castle was when its walls were being torn down for the railroad embank-

ment, the same embankment, I suppose, over which the train bore me to the City of Peace and you."

"Yes, but thanks to the Emperor, not the same embankment now." Lynette closed her eyes for a moment to bring back the picture of the Castle as they had seen it on their home-coming the night before. The moon that burnished the lake to silver, etched also gnarled pine trees on the massive foundations, glistened on the white superstructure, and high over all tipped like two stars the dolphins of its gabled roofs. Not a stone was missing; all had been replaced.

"I often wonder," rejoined Plum Blossom, "at the quaint courage of Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount in sending me to the city to save the castle. Poor old Empress-Dowager!" She laughed softly, "How the tables were turned on her hatred. Yet how she must have hated me in that insignia of a hated House, until she understood."

"And that other lady, who told you first of your mother, is it permitted now to name her, Treasure Flower?"

Plum Blossom's cheeks grew suddenly the color of her flower. "Yesterday, the Empress herself graciously gave me the permission. But you and I had guessed her secret long ago."

They were silent again, looking in fancy back over the years. Not the many times the Empress had favored her small kinswoman later, nor the years of study and travel which had carried her far from the ideals of her childhood in foreign lands, could dim for Plum Blossom the amazing condescension of her Empress in visiting her and telling her of her mother so many years ago. No, not even yesterday, when at the banquet given in his honor, the same Empress had pinned on her father's coat the decoration that signified his restoration to the nobility and to his ancestral home.

With a quick movement, Lynette started up.

"Come, we must dream no longer. It is almost time for your father to arrive."

But as they passed through the suites of rooms to their own apartments, they saw little to alter. The feast in the kitchen was ready, the mats in the reception room were placed for the guests; in the alcove hung a priceless *kakemono,*[39] before the raised seat of the owner rested in a sword-rack his precious swords. In short, the House of Hojo, as it might have waited a quarter of a century earlier, was waiting for its lord.

Plum Blossom gave a last pleased glance about her. More than ever, she felt repaid in coming on before her father to set the villa in order for him.

Yet none of the events of the busy day at the Castle had afforded her keener pleasure than the morning descent on the temple to surprise Aunt Lavender and Uncle Cedarmount. Much as she remembered it, only smaller and trigger in its well kept court, the temple nestled in the

pine clad hills. And just as she remembered them and loved them, except for a few more wrinkles and gray hairs, were the dear priest and his wife. The same gold fish in the pond—or at least they looked the same—came to her hand-clapping for their breakfast as they used to do. But Cho-Cho and the baby foxes were missing; they had grown and gone away. Perhaps, Uncle Cedarmount thought, the bustling train that resounded through the little valley had frightened them. At all events, they were gone.

"And are the spring children gone too?" questioned Plum Blossom somewhat sadly, as she looked across to the Temple.

"Yes," smiled the priest, "they too have gone, to make room for worshipers."

But the Goddess Benten was still there, brooding in the shrine that chanced at that hour to be empty. For a long time Plum Blossom stood looking at the kind and merciful Goddess who had watched over her childhood,

nay, had brought her in the Treasure Ship to the haven of her desires. She turned to the tablet placed in memory of her mother, a no less hallowed spot. "Surely my mother sees us this day and rejoices," she said in her heart. And into the open coffer of the temple as she left, she slipped a golden coin.

But Uncle Cedarmount and Aunt Lavender saw nothing but laughter in the eyes of the girl, so strange yet so familiar, who bore them away with her to the villa, telling them she had need of them there. To them she gave the directing of the servants she had brought with her, in the placing of the Master's heirlooms, and the preparation of the feast.

As the two girls entered their room, they found Aunt Lavender waiting for them. On a lacquered rack, she had hung two dresses. Both of them you have seen before. One was a plum-flowered crêpe, the other held in a golden net the Hojo's butterfly crest. With her own hands the white haired woman waited on the

bath and dressed her charges. None too soon were the butterfly *kanzashi,* both alike, set in their high piled coiffures.

A carriage clattered across the moat, and Uncle Cedarmount threw open the gate to the Lord of the Barrier.

Of the feast that followed, in many courses, I can only say that all the dignitaries of the town were present, greatly honoring their once proscribed lord. Two notable foreigners were also there by special invitation, Dr. Bowne, Chief of Staff of the Imperial Hospital, and his wife. At the feast's conclusion, Prince Hojo, as he was thenceforth known, showed his guests over the illuminated grounds and the stately castle halls. Fireworks for the townspeople followed, till it seemed as if the lake, flashing in fairy splendor, were lighted by the Dragon King himself.

Dawn came stealing along the still lighted balconies of the villa, before the last guests left.

As the gate clanged on their departure, Prince Hojo turned with a sigh of relief to his daughter who stood beside him. "Would it please you to be always Lady of the Castle?" he said.

"What do you mean, father dear?"

"This." He laid his hand caressingly on her gold emblazoned sleeve. "It is you to whom I owe my castle, you who saved it from destruction. I am too busy with my many duties to enjoy it or do it justice. Will you not keep it in trust for me?"

Thus it came about that when I visited Japan, I found Plum Blossom and Lynette not in the gay whirl of the Capital, but in an old Castle beside a lute-shaped lake. Already our princess was interesting herself in bettering the condition of her farmers and tenants. Lynette,—gay, tender, impractical Lynette—was helping her. And so far as I could learn, the only cloud in all their sky was regret that Pomegranate and Cherryfield had preferred

independence and a farm in the Hokkaido to even the service of a princess. But since the farm was given them by the princess's father, how could they be blamed?

CENTRAL CIRCULATION
CHILDREN'S ROOM

NOTES

No. 1. Torii:—A gate consisting of two upright and two transverse beams, very beautiful in proportions, and usually painted red. It is placed at the entrance of Shinto temples. [See illustration, p. 84.]

No. 2. Mochi:—Rice paste made from an especially glutinous variety of rice, and molded into decorations as well as cakes for the New Year festivities.

No. 3. Rank-Cap:—Each rank of the old nobility was strictly designated by the color of the rank-cap made of gauze. Later, lacquer also was used and different shapes were prescribed.

No. 4. Ronin:—Literally, wave-man, meaning a knight without a master, and so blown about like a wave, without direction.

No. 5. Benten:—Goddess of learning and of love; a Buddhist deity brought from India, who took the place of an older Shinto goddess. [See illustration, p. 142.]

No. 6. O medito:—Universal New Year salutation, meaning Happy Congratulation.

No. 7. Abbot of Hiei:—The Buddhist religion has

monastic orders very similar to those of the Roman Catholic Church. Of all the monasteries, that of Hieizan, with its thousand temples and three thousand monks and acolytes, was the wealthiest and most powerful. Its special function was to pray for the peace of the Emperor in the Capital in the valley below.

No. 8. Bu:—A copper coin, the fourth part of a *ryo.* (See below.)

No. 9. Andon:—A rush light with a paper shade like a lantern, held on a standard.

No. 10. Koku:—A measure equal to half a bushel. The wealth of each feudal lord, and hence his power, was reckoned in *Koku* of rice. [See illustration, p. 16.]

No. 11. Samurai:—A feudal retainer, bowman, armorer, or knight.

No. 12. Sake:—A fermented drink made from rice; rice-wine.

No. 13. Geta:—Wooden clogs.

No. 14. Oni:—An imp or devil usually depicted with red hair.

No. 15. Heavenly Throne:—A designation either of the Emperor or of his station. In the old chronicles, each ruler, on the death of his predecessor "ascended the Heavenly Seat." Heavenly refers to the Emperor's divine origin.

No. 16. Ri:—A measure or distance corresponding to 2½ miles.

No. 17. Yamato:—Now a province southeast of Kyoto, was the first civilized portion of Japan, and for

many centuries contained the Capital, Nara. It is the poetic name still used to designate the whole Empire.

No. 18. Kanzashi:—An ornamental hairpin.

No. 19. Koi:—Carp, much esteemed as a table delicacy, and also regarded as the symbol of courageous purpose.

No. 20. Kago:—A palanquin. [See illustration, p. 64.]

No. 21. Cryptomeria:—A species of cedar. [See illustration, p. 199.]

No. 22. Shaka:—One of the Japanese names for Buddha.

No. 23. City of Peace:—This is the meaning of Kyoto, the name of the ancient Capital.

No. 24. Shimmei:—One of the names of the Sun-Goddess.

No. 25. Jinrikisha:—A two-wheeled conveyance, something like a dogcart, but lighter, and drawn by a man.

No. 26. Botan:—Japanese name for peony, of which Japan has wonderful varieties.

No. 27. Flowery Nobles:—The nobility was formerly divided into court nobles, *Kuge,* and military nobles, *daimio.* At the Restoration, the two classes were merged under the common title, "Flower Families."

No. 28. Son of Heaven:—Title of the Emperor, indicating his descent from the Sun-Goddess.

No. 29. Tengu:—Goblin or monster, with immense wings and horrible claws.

No. 30. Heaven Born:—See 28.

No. 31. Saiyonara:—Parting salutation; good-by.

No. 32. No:—A dance or pantomimic play of religious origin, portraying events in the lives of heroes, saints or gods.

No. 33. Five Provinces:—The provinces of Yamato, Yamashiro, Kawachi, Senshiu and Settsu, immediately surrounding the Capital; hence the oldest and most aristocratic part of the Empire.

No. 34. The Buddhist Temple:—It differs from the Shinto temple in its gate, a massive two-story structure instead of a *torii;* in its roof, tiled instead of thatched; and, of course, in its ritual and teachings. But the two forms of worship have become so mingled that we sometimes find, as in our story, the Buddhist goddess Benten in a Shinto shrine.

No. 35. Kaga Ware:—A very fine porcelain, distinguished by its decorations in clear red and gold, made by the potters of the Lord of Kaga, the richest of all the *daimio.*

No. 36. Genghis Khan:—The Tartar conqueror of Central Asia, including Mongolia and a large part of China and Russia, in the twelfth century.

No. 37. Ryo:—A silver coin, equivalent to about $1.25.

No. 38. From a translation by Madame Yei Ozaki.

No. 39. Kakemono:—A painted panel, usually of silk, hung in the alcove of a Japanese room. When the room is not in use, the panel is rolled up and carefully put away.

RULES OF PRONUNCIATION

The simple rules, which will hold for all Japanese words used in this book are: Vowels sounded as in Latin or Italian, consonants as in English. All vowels are sounded, except in the case of diphthongs, e. g., Ben-kei, in which the last syllable has the value of ĕ; Hi-ei, in which the last syllable has the value of ē. There is no marked accent on any one syllable of a word.

CENTRAL CIRCULATION
CHILDREN'S ROOM